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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF THE

REV. ANDREW FULLER,

LATE PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT KETTERING, AND

FIRST SECRETARY TO THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

BY J. W. MORRIS.

FIRST AMERICAN, FROM THE LAST LONDON EDITION.

EDITED BY RUFUS BABCOCK, JUN.

Boston:

PUBLISHED BY LINCOLN & EDMANDS.

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1830.

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1830

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, *to wit:*

District Clerk's Office.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the sixteenth day of July, A. D. 1830, in the fifty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, LINCOLN & EDMANDS, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, *to wit*:

"Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, late Pastor of the Baptist church at Kettering, and first Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society. By J. W. Morris. First American, from the last London Edition. Edited by Rufus Babcock, jr.

In Conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an Act entitled "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts and Books to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies during the times therein mentioned: and extending the Benefits thereof to the Arts of Designing, Engraving and Etching Historical, and other Prints."

JNO. W. DAVIS, *Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

In presenting to the American Public, another Memoir of the illustrious individual whose life and writings form the subject of this volume, a brief exposition of the object intended to be accomplished, may not be inappropriate.

To lead the minds of the thoughtful and ingenuous to a consideration of the doctrines and duties which Mr. Fuller stated with such lucid distinctness, and defended with such force of Scripture and reason—to excite in all whose circumstances will possibly allow its exercise, the same ardent thirst for intellectual and biblical attainment which he exhibited, and to hold up in full relief, the example of industry, enterprise and perseverance, furnished in his life and labours, to the imitation of Christians, and especially of Christian Ministers, has seemed of sufficient importance to warrant the sending forth of another volume from the press.

It will naturally be asked, Has not the Life of Fuller, by the late Dr. Ryland, which was some years since republished in this country, accomplished the object here proposed? To some extent it undoubtedly has; but the more judicious and discriminating, on both sides of the Atlantic, have earnestly desired a more striking delineation of those powers of mind and habits of life, which, by the grace of God, raised the subject of these Memoirs from obscurity, and enabled him to confer favours so immense on British and American Christians, and on the idolatrous millions in India.

Such a delineation is here presented. I has been received—especially the enlarged and greatly improved edition from which this is printed—with most decided approbation by those who are best qualified to judge of its faithfulness and ability. To render it more generally aeceptable

and useful in this country, some omissions have been made, both of incidents possessing a mere local interest, and of remarks and reflections, arising from a relation and bias of decidedly personal character. The omission of some sentences and paragraphs of this description will certainly not be regretted, especially as the space which they occupied, has been filled by a selection from valuable materials, to which the author in composing the work, could not have had access.

In preparing this edition, besides consulting the most able and impartial reviews of the work, in the contemporary English journals, the Editor has availed himself of the information of individuals in this country; and particularly of one, who, as the pupil and successor of Dr. Ryland—the neighbour of the Author of these Memoirs—and the intimate and confidential friend of the subject of them, till his death—possesses advantages for rendering assistance in this service, of a most valuable character, and for whose kindness in imparting the necessary information, this slight acknowledgment is felt to be a very inadequate return.

Two classes of individuals, it is believed, will derive very important advantages from the perusal of these Memoirs. Those who have already been constrained, by circumstances beyond their control, to attempt discharging the duties of the Christian ministry, with but very slight literary or theological attainments, and with minds but imperfectly disciplined, will here see what may be done, even in the most discouraging circumstances, to prepare them more perfectly for their great work. They will learn from the example here presented, that it is not in the want of College Halls, extensive libraries, uninterrupted and dignified leisure, and able instructers, to prevent the progress of one whose soul thirsts for divine truth, and who is conscientiously impelled to possess himself of clear and correct views of it, in order to inculcate it effectually. Let but this spirit animate all the ministers of the gospel, and ignorance would not long disgrace their sacred office. They will see too, in the zeal and self-denying efforts for the Missionary Society, here described, what can be done in a great and good cause, by the persevering devotedness of a Christian pastor, who never conceived of his duty as cir-

cumscribed by the limits of his own parish, but who felt the force of the mandate, "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*"

The examples of self-improvement, and enlarged evangelical efforts, which are presented in the lives of such men as Fuller and Baldwin, and the still surviving and venerable Dr. Carey, should not be lost. On the younger class of ministers, whose circumstances in the commencement of the work are similar to theirs, such instances of success present the most cheering encouragement.

The other class of readers, for whom this volume, especially the reviews it contains, seems admirably adapted, consists of by no means an inconsiderable number, who, having imbibed a violent prejudice against the doctrines which they suppose that Fuller advocated, have never been candid enough to read the very works which they so loudly condemn. They will here find, within limits so reasonable, that none need be repelled from making the experiment of their perusal, such an outline of his real sentiments, as will probably lead them to reverse their unfavourable opinions, and read at length, some of the admirable treatises, both doctrinal and practical here brought to their notice. Should this result be extensively effected in the churches of Christ throughout our country, their best interests would in a very high degree be promoted.

The eloquent Robert Hall, in one of his controversial works, having incidentally mentioned the subject of these Memoirs, proceeds with his usual felicity and discrimination, to characterize him in the following manner: "I cannot refrain from expressing in a few words the sentiments of affectionate veneration with which I always regarded that excellent person while living, and cherish his memory now that he is no more; a man, whose sagacity enabled him to penetrate to the depths of every subject he explored; whose conceptions were so powerful and luminous, that what was recondite and original appeared familiar; what was intricate, easy and perspicuous in his hands; equally successful in enforcing the practical, stating the theoretical, and discussing the polemical branches of theology. Without the advantage of early education, he rose to high distinction among the religious writers of his day;

and in the midst of a most active and laborious life, left monuments of his piety and genius which will survive to distant posterity. Were I making his eulogium, I should necessarily dwell on the spotless integrity of his private life, his fidelity in friendship, his neglect of self-interest, his ardent attachment to truth, and especially the series of unceasing labours and exertions in superintending the mission to India, to which he most probably fell a victim. He had nothing feeble or undecisive in his character, but to every undertaking in which he engaged, he brought all the powers of his understanding, all the energies of his heart; and if he were less distinguished by the comprehension, than the acumen and solidity of his thoughts: less eminent for the gentler graces, than for stern integrity and native grandeur of mind, we have only to remember the necessary limitation of human excellence. While he endeared himself to his denomination by a long course of most useful labour, by his excellent works on the Socinian and Deistical controversies, as well as his devotion to the cause of missions, he laid the world under lasting obligations."

That the Saviour whom this great and good man served with so single an eye, and such distinguished success, may make this memorial of HIS servant extensively useful, is the humble desire of

THE EDITOR.

Salem, July, 1830.

EXTRACT FROM THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The frailty of human nature, the lapse of time, and the incessant recurrence of other objects, possess a most fatal tendency to efface the remembrance of those once dear to us, or whose virtues and achievements require to be perpetuated for the benefit of posterity. Ere many years have fled, the minuter parts and finer traits of character are obliterated; nothing remains but the rude projecting outline, which affords but little to gratify the taste, or increase the aggregate of public information. There have been numerous instances in which the lives of eminent persons have died away from the page of history, and of whom little more has been recorded than that they once were, but now are not.

> "Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
> The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear."

The world has thus lost some of its most valuable treasures, and history some of brightest ornaments. A remote successor may attempt to retrace and complete the portrait; but of the correctness of the execution, who shall judge? Cotemporary biography has, therefore, important advantages, which subsequent compositions do not possess; it must, at least, furnish the ore, by which the latter are to be enriched. The history of persons who have lived in the same age and nation with ourselves, excites also an interest which we do not feel respecting others who have flourished at a distant period.

It is not every cotemporary, however, not every one acquainted with departed worth, who is qualified for the requisite delineation. There is an identity of character, as real and as certain as the identity of persons; but it is such as can only be distinguished and described by the most perfect kind of familiarity. The author of the fol-

lowing sheets pretends to no other qualification than this, except that he also claims an inflexible fidelity. He professes to have enjoyed a long and intimate acquaintance with the distinguished individual whose Memoirs he now submits to the public—an acquaintance more intimate and unreserved than was enjoyed by any other person. He has seen him in every shape and attitude, amidst his multifarious labours, and in the moments of relaxation; has known him in every difficulty, and shared with him all the pains and pleasures of life. How such intimacies originate, is not easily accounted for; the most genuine and the most gratifying are generally unstudied and unsought, and are both the cause and the effect of an unremitted intercourse. Such was the case in the present instance. The interchange of thought and feeling, by conversation, by letter, by preaching, by every mode of expression, was continued almost daily for a number of years, during the most active and enterprising period of life; and accompanied with a freedom, a collision, and a confidence that knew no bounds. Had the author employed the vigilance of a Lauterbach or a Boswell, amidst the innumerable opportunities which occurred, greater intellectual treasures might have been added to the present compilation; but they are now "like water spilled upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up." He can only present to the candid notice of the reader, the little which he happened to preserve, or which his recollection has been able to supply.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

The Publishers have issued this approved Memoir of the distinguished Fuller, with an intention of giving the public an edition of his Works in the same neat and cheap style.

When the public shall have read the able Reviews of all his Works, which this volume contains, it must excite a wish in every bosom, to possess the valuable treasure which they comprise. Each volume will be prefaced with an Introductory Essay, by American divines of acknowledged talents.

Boston, July, 1830.

MEMOIRS.

CHAPTER 1.

Mr. Fuller's Parentage—Early life—Conversion—Call to the Ministry—Change of Sentiment—Labours and Difficulties at Soham.

Like many other great and original characters, Mr. Andrew Fuller arose out of obscurity, without any flattering prospect of future eminence. When he first made his appearance on the theatre of public life, there was little to attract the notice, or excite the esteem of his cotemporaries. Regardless, however, of adventitious circumstances, he was propelled by the force of his own native genius, and owed as little to artificial culture, as he did to the smiles of opulence, or the honours of descent.

He was born at Wicken, a small village in Cambridgeshire, about seven miles from Ely, on the 6th of February, 1754; and in his youth received only the common rudiments of an English education, at the free school at Soham. His father, Mr. Robert Fuller, at the period of his son Andrew's birth, occupied a small farm at Wicken, and was the parent of three sons, of whom the subject of this Memoir was the youngest. His brothers were Mr. Robert Fuller, a farmer at Isleham, born in 1747; and Mr. John Fuller, born in 1748, who resides at Little Bentley in Essex, both of them deacons of Baptist churches.

Eminent as Mr. Andrew Fuller afterwards became for piety and usefulness, his youthful days were spent in sin and vanity; and the history of this period affords a lamentable proof of the depravity of human nature, while it illustrates the sovereign efficacy of renewing grace, and its richness and freeness to the chief of sinners. It will

be seen in the following narrative, drawn up by Mr. Fuller himself, about the year 1798, and communicated in a letter to a friend, how deeply he felt himself indebted to the grace of God, and what were the grounds of his attachment to that doctrine which became the theme of his future ministry.

"My parents," says he, "were Dissenters, of the Calvinistic persuasion. They were engaged in husbandry, which occupation I followed till the twentieth year of my age. At this distance of time it is not easy to recollect all that happened; but I remember many of the sins of my childhood: among which were, lying, cursing, and swearing. It is true, as to the latter, it never became habitual. I had a dread upon my spirits to such a degree, that when I uttered an oath, or any imprecation, it was by a kind of force put upon my feelings, and merely to appear manly, like other boys with whom I associated. This being the case, when I was about ten years old I entirely left it off, except that I sometimes dealt in a sort of minced oaths and imprecations, when my passions were inflamed.

"In the practice of telling lies I continued some years longer; at length, however, I began to think this a mean vice, and accordingly left it off, except in cases where I was under some pressing temptation.

"I think I must have been nearly fourteen years old, before I began to have any serious thoughts about futurity. The preaching which I attended was not adapted to awaken my conscience, as the minister had seldom any thing to say except to believers; and what believing was, I neither knew, nor greatly cared to know. I remember, however, about this time, as I was walking alone, I put the question to myself, What is faith? There is much made of it,—what is it? I could not tell; but satisfied myself in thinking it was not of immediate concern, and I should understand it as a grew older.

"Sometimes conviction laid fast hold of me, and rendered me extremely unhappy. One winter evening in particular, I went to a smith's shop, where a number of other boys sat round the fire. Presently they began to sing vain songs. This appeared to me so much like revelling, that I felt something within that would not suffer me to join them; and while I sat silent, in rather an unpleasant muse, these words sunk deep into my mind: 'What

doest thou here, Elijah?' They had such an effect upon me, that I immediately left the company; yet, shocking to reflect upon, I walked away murmuring in my heart against God, that I could not be let alone, and suffered to take my pleasure like other youth.

"At other times I was greatly affected by reading or thinking of the doctrines of Christianity. One day in particular, I took up Mr. R. Erskine's 'Gospel Sonnets,' and opening upon a piece called 'A Gospel Catechism for young Christians, or Christ all in all in our complete Redemption,' I read; and as I read, I wept. Indeed, I was almost overcome with weeping, so interesting did the doctrine of eternal salvation appear to me; yet, there being no radical change in my heart, these thoughts passed away, and I was equally intent on the pursuit of folly as heretofore.

"Sometimes I felt a strange kind of regard towards good people, such of them especially as were familiar in their behaviour to young persons, and would occasionally talk with me about religion. I used to wish I had many thousand pounds, that I might give some of it to those of them who were poor in their worldly circumstances.

"I was sometimes the subject of such convictions and affections, that I really thought myself a converted person, and lived under that delusion for some years. The ground on which I rested this opinion was as follows:—One day as I was walking alone, I began to think seriously what would become of my soul! I felt myself the slave of sin. Till now, I did not know but that I could repent at any time; but now I perceived that my heart was wicked, and that it was not in me to turn to God, or to break off my sins by righteousness. I saw that if God would forgive me all the past, and offer me the kingdom of heaven on the condition of giving up my wicked pursuits, I should not accept it. This conviction was accompanied with great depression of heart. I walked sorrowfully along, repeating these words,—Iniquity will be my ruin! Iniquity will be my ruin! While pouring over my unhappy case, those words of the Apostle suddenly occurred to my mind: 'Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.' Now the suggestion of a text of Scripture to the mind, and especially if it came with power, was generally considered by religious people, with whom I occasionally associated, as a promise coming immediately

from God. I therefore so understood it, and thought that God had thus revealed to me that I was in a state of salvation; and that, therefore, iniquity should not, as I had feared, be my ruin. The effect was, I was overcome with joy and transport. I shed, I suppose, thousands of tears as I walked along, and seemed to feel myself as it were in a new world. It appeared to me that I hated my sins, and was resolved to forsake them. Thinking on my wicked courses, I remember using those words of Paul: 'Shall I continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid!' I felt, or seemed to feel, the strongest indignation at the thought. But strange as it may appear, though my face was that morning swelled with weeping, yet before night all was gone and forgotten, and I returned to my former vices with as eager a gust as ever; nor do I remember that for more than half a year after it, I had any serious thoughts about the salvation of my soul.

"About a year afterwards, however, I was again walking by myself, and began to reflect upon my course of life, particularly upon my former hopes and affections, and how I had since forgotten them all, and returned to all my wicked ways. Instead of sin having no more dominion over me, I perceived that its dominion was increased. For some minutes I was greatly dejected, but was instantly relieved by what I accounted another promise from God. These words were suggested to my mind: 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.' By this, as by the former, I was overcome with what I considered to be God's great love to me, and shed a multitude of tears, not of sorrow, but of joy and gratitude. I now considered myself as having been in a backsliding state, and that God had graciously restored me; though in truth I have every reason to think that the great deep of my heart's depravity had not yet been broken up, and that all my religion was mere transient impression, without any abiding principle. Amidst it all, I had lived without prayer; and was never, that I recollect, induced to deny myself of one sin when temptations were presented. I now, however, thought, surely I shall be better for the time to come. But alas! in a few days this also was forgotten, and I returned to my evil courses with as much eagerness as ever.

"I now began to draw towards sixteen years of age; and as my powers and passions strengthened, I was more and more addicted to evil. Nor was I merely prompted

by my own propensities; for having formed connexions with other wicked youths, my progress in the way to death was thereby greatly accelerated. Being of an athletic frame, and of a daring spirit, I was often engaged in such exercises and exploits as might have issued in death, if the good hand of God had not preserved me. I also frequently engaged in games of hazard, which, though not one to any great amount, they were very bewitching to me, and tended greatly to corrupt my mind. These, with various other evil courses, had so hardened my heart that I seldom thought of religion. Nay, I recollect that on a Lord's day evening, about this time, when my parents were reading in the family, I was shamefully engaged with one of the servants, playing idle tricks, though I took care not to be seen in them. These things were nothing to me at that time; for my conscience, by reiterated acts of wickedness, had become 'seared as with a hot iron:' they were heavy burdens, however, to me afterwards.

"Having persisted in this course for a time, I began to be very uneasy, particularly in a morning when I first awoke. It was almost as common for me to be seized with keen remorse at this hour, as it was to go into bad company in the evening. At first I began to make vows of reformation, and this for the moment would afford a little ease; but as the temptations returned, my vows were of no account. It was an enlightened conscience only that was on the side of God: my heart was still averse to every thing spiritual or holy. For several weeks I went on in this way; vowing, and breaking my vows; reflecting on myself for my evil conduct, and yet continually repeating it.

"It was not now as heretofore: my convictions followed me up closely. I could not, as formerly, forget these things, and was therefore a poor miserable creature, like a drunkard who carouses in the evening, but mopes about the next day like one half dead. One morning, as I was walking alone, I felt an uncommon load upon my heart. The remembrance of my sin, not only on the past evening, but for a long time back,—the breach of my vows, and the shocking termination of my former hopes and affections, all uniting together, formed a burden which I knew not how to bear. The gnawings of a guilty conscience, seemed to be a kind of hell within me. Nay, I really

thought at the time, that this was the fire and brimstone of the bottomless pit, and that in me it was already kindled. I do not write in the language of exaggeration. I now know that the sense which I then had of the evil of my sin, and the dreadfulness of God's righteous displeasure against me on account of it, came very far short of *truth*, though they seemed more than I was able to sustain. When I thought of my broken vows, they served to convince me that there was no truth in me, and that I was altogether wicked. I subscribed to the justice of my doom, if I were sent to hell; and plainly saw that to hell I must go, unless I were saved of mere grace, and as it were in spite of myself. I sensibly perceived that if God were to forgive me all the past, I should again destroy my soul, and that in a very little time: I never before felt myself such an odious and helpless sinner. I seemed to have nothing about me that ought to excite the pity of God, or that I could reasonably expect should do so; but every thing disgusting to him, and provoking to the eyes of his glory.

"And now the question would turn in my mind, six or seven times over, What must I do? What shall I do? Indeed, I felt utterly at a loss what to do. To think of amendment, and much more to make vows concerning it as heretofore, were but a mockery of God and my own soul; and to hope for forgiveness in the course that I was in, was the height of presumption. So I had no refuge. For a moment, despair took hold upon me, and I even thought of returning, and taking my fill of sin, let the consequences be what they might; but then again the thoughts of being lost, and lost forever, sunk into my soul like lead into the waters. While thinking on this, my past hopes also recurred to my mind, and aggravated the idea of eternal punishment. What, thought I, shall I at once bid adieu to Christ, and hope, and heaven—and plunge my soul into endless ruin! At this my heart revolted. What shall I do? What can I do? This was all I could say.

"It is difficult at this distance of time to recollect with precision the minute workings of my mind; but as near as I can remember, I was like a man drowning, looking every way for help, or rather catching for something by which he might save his life. I tried to find out whether there were any hope in divine mercy—any in the Saviour of sinners; but felt repulsed in the thoughts of mercy having been so basely abused already. In this state of mind, as I was

moving slowly on, I thought of the resolution of Job: 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' And forasmuch as it yielded me a faint ray of hope, I repeated the words many times over; and at each repetition, I seemed to gather a little strength. It excited a sort of peradventure, that the Saviour of sinners may save my life,—mixed with a determination, *if I might*, to cast my perishing soul upon him for salvation, to be both pardoned and purified, for I felt that I needed the one as much as the other.

"I was not then aware that *any* poor sinner had a warrant to believe in Christ for the salvation of his soul; but supposed there must be some kind of qualification to entitle him to do it; yet I was aware that I had no qualifications. On a review of my resolution at that time, it seems to resemble that of Esther, who went into the king's presence 'contrary to the law,' and at the hazard of her life. Like her, I seemed reduced to extremities; impelled by dire necessity to run all hazards, even though I should perish in the attempt. Yet it was not altogether from a dread of wrath that I fled to this refuge; for I well remember that I perceived something attracting in the Saviour. I must—I will—yes, I will trust my soul—my sinful lost soul—in his hands. If I perish, I perish! Such in substance were my resolutions. In this state of mind I continued nearly an hour, weeping and supplicating mercy for the Saviour's sake; (my soul hath it still in remembrance, and is humbled in me!) and as the eye of my mind was more and more fixed on him, my guilt and fears were gradually and insensibly removed.

"I now found rest for my troubled soul, and I reckon that I should have found it sooner, if I had not entertained the notion of my having no warrant to come to Christ, without some previous qualification. This notion was a bar that kept me back for a time, though, through divine drawings, I was enabled to overleap it. As near as I can remember in the early part of these exercises, when I subcribed to the justice of God in my condemnation, and thought of the Saviour of sinners, I had then relinquished every false confidence, believed my help to be only in him, and approved of salvation by grace alone, through his death: and if at that time I had known that any poor sinner *might* warrantably have trusted in him for salvation, I conceive I should have done so, and have found rest to my soul sooner than I did. I mention this because it may be the case with others, who may be kept in darkness and desponden-

cy by erroneous views of the gospel much longer than I was.

"I think also I did repent of my sin in the early part of these exercises, and before I thought that Christ would accept and save my soul. I conceive that, justifying God in my condemnation, and approving the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, necessarily included it; yet I did not think at the time that this was repentance, or any thing truly good. Indeed I thought nothing about the exercises of my own mind, but merely of my guilty and lost condition, and whether there were any hope of escape for me. But having found rest for my soul in the cross of Christ, I was now *conscious* of my being the subject of repentance, faith and love. When I thought of my past life, I abhorred myself, and repented in dust and ashes; and when of the gospel way of salvation, I drank it in, as cold water is imbibed by a thirsty soul. My heart felt one with Christ, and dead to every other object around me. I thought that I had found the joys of the gospel heretofore; but now I seemed to *know* that I had found them, and was conscious that I had passed from death unto life. Yet even now my mind was not so engaged in reflecting upon my own feelings, as upon the objects which occasioned them.

"From this time my former wicked courses were forsaken. I had no manner of desire after them. They lost their influence upon me. To those evils, a glance at which before would have instantly set my passions in a flame, I now felt no inclination. My soul, said I, with joy and triumph, is as a weaned child. I now knew experimentally what it was to be dead to the world by the cross of Christ, and to feel an habitual determination to devote my future life to God my Saviour.

From this time I considered the vows of God as upon me. But ah! I have great reason for shame and bitter reflection, in reviewing the manner in which they have been fulfilled. Nevertheless, by the help of God I continue in his service to this day: and daily live in hope of eternal life, through Jesus Christ my Lord and only Saviour."

The above simple and affecting narrative abounds with that sound discrimination, for which the author was so remarkable. That which passes very currently for true conversion, was with him no better than reprobate silver, and nothing would suffice but the religion of the heart. There is also in this, as in all his other compositions, that severity

of suspicion, that inflexible demand for incorruptness and purity of principle, which indicates a deep insight into human nature, and is well adapted to warn against the danger of self deception, rather than afford encouragement to those feelings which commonly precede conversion.

Mr. Fuller's family had now resided at Soham several years, where he was employed by his father in the farming business, and milked a dairy of cows every morning. One of the servants, a pious man, began to converse with him very freely on religious subjects, and he soon afterwards attended the meetings for prayer, and took a part in the exercises. Afraid of being drawn aside by former temptations, he made it a practice for several years, whenever a feast or holiday occurred, to go to a neighbouring village, to visit some christian friends, and returned home when all was over. Thus he was delivered from participating in those follies which had given him so much uneasiness, and turned the season of temptation into a season of spiritual improvement. In the month of March, 1770, he for the first time witnessed the administration of the ordinance of believers' baptism; and in the following month was himself baptized on a profession of repentance and faith, being then in the seventeenth year of his age. He endured the scoffs and revilings of his former associates with great calmness, and returned his pity for their contempt.

Having become a member of the church at Soham, under the pastoral care of Mr. John Eve, who was a retired man and fond of reading, he cultivated an acquaintance with Mr. Joseph Diver, who was baptized at the same time, and soon became his intimate and bosom friend, though much his senior in point of years. The intercourse became highly interesting to young Fuller, whose powers were beginning to expand; and which were no sooner directed towards the important objects of religion, than he pursued them with all his might. The attachment between him and the church was also warm and mutual, and he was singularly happy in his new connexion.

A case, however, soon occurred, which changed the scene, and turned the gladness into grief and trouble. He happened to be the first who knew of an offence having been committed by one of the members, and went to admonish him according to the rule given in Matt. xviii. 15—18. The excuses alleged by the offender, and the steps

which followed, brought the matter before the church. In the course of the discipline, a discussion took place of various doctrines respecting the power of fallen man to obey God, and keep himself from sin, with other relative sentiments. Great disagreement arose out of this, and many disputes, which ended in the division of the church, the resignation of the pastor, and his removal from among them, in October, 1771.

Young and inexperienced as Fuller then was, these disputes deeply engaged his attention, and were the means of suggesting to him the consideration of many topics on which his pen was afterwards employed. He used to call them "the wormwood and the gall of his youth;" yet to these, under God, he ascribed almost all his future views, and the leading events of his life. If he judged or wrote to any good purpose, it was then he would say, "he learned to do so by bitter experience." Nothing now was looked for, but the dissolution of the church. For several weeks, *he* went to another place. Those members, however, who kept together, appointed a day for fasting and prayer, and invited all who were scattered to unite in this. He accepted the invitation, and from that time continued with them.

The church at Soham having become destitute, and being scarcely in a condition to obtain or support another minister, it was found expedient to supply this lack of service by engaging the assistance of some one of their own members. Mr. Joseph Diver, being now one of the deacons of the church, generally took the lead in conducting public worship. He was a man of some ability, had an extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures, and possessed considerable piety and prudence. His practice was, to read a chapter or a paragraph, and attempt a short illustration of the passage, for the edification and instruction of his brethren. It seems, however, that this was not to the entire satisfaction of young Fuller, who longed for the privilege of having the pastoral office once more filled up among them.

A proposition was, about this time, made to him to be apprenticed to some business, to which he had formerly been inclined; and his mother, judging the "candlestick to have been removed" from Soham, mentioned to him a vacancy of which she had heard, and which if he choosed to accept, would afford him the opportunity of hearing the gospel preached every Lord's day. But, slender as were

the advantages to be derived from his religious connections at Soham, he felt reluctant to leave them. Compassion for their destitute circumstances, and a wish like that which Jonah experienced, "to see what would become of the city,' induced him to continue where he was.

In this state of things, a singular occurrence in Providence paved the way for his being himself introduced into that important station. Having occasion, on a Saturday in the month of November, 1771, to go to one of the neighbouring villages, his thoughts became fixed, during the journey, on the words of the Psalmist: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Psl. xxx. 5. His mind was led out into a pleasing meditation on the passage, and a thought suggested itself to him that he could possibly say something upon it that might be instructive to others. On the following morning, when he met his brethren for public worship, it was found that the deacon who usually presided, and engaged in reading and exhortation, was unable to attend; in consequence of which, Mr. Fuller was solicited by the other deacon, to read the Scriptures and say a few words to the congregation. The request, as we may naturally suppose, not a little surprised him, and occasioned some hesitation; but he at length yielded to their importunity, and delivered a discourse of about half an hour, on the words which had occupied his thoughts the preceding day. He was invited on a subsequent occasion, again to deliver an exhortation; but as volubility of speech, rather than any other qualification, is generally considered as the principal requisite for a pulpit orator, Mr. Fuller's strong sense and sterling piety, accompanied as they were, with a rough and heavy manner of address, were scarcely sufficient to secure his acceptance.

From this time to the end of 1772, Mr. Fuller does not appear to have been called upon to occupy his talent in the way of public teaching. Mr. Diver is said to have (too hastily) remarked, that it was needless to encourage him, for that he would never make a preacher! Happily, for the world at large, however, about the beginning of the year 1773, an opportunity was again afforded him by the absence of Mr. Diver, to address his brethren, which he did from Luke xix. 10. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." He spoke at this time with great freedom, arrested the attention of his audience,

and was the happy means of producing conviction in the minds of several young persons who afterwards united with the church.

In the course of the following year he baptized two persons, and was invited by his brethren to accept the pastoral office. The invitation was several times repeated, and on his part declined, from the sense of unfitness and incompetency. His mind was nevertheless intensely occupied in the pursuit of truth, and in viewing the progress of a controversy which was going on in his neighbourhood. Mr. Robinson of Cambridge, and some other Baptist ministers, were writing in favour of Open Communion; and though Mr. Fuller did not venture to publish any thing in reply, he composed a few pages in defence of Strict Communion, in which he endeavoured to meet the objections of the opponent party. The manuscript, written in his twentieth year, was not intended for general inspection. The substance of it has since been incorporated in a posthumous pamphlet, published by Dr. Newman; and some notice will be taken of it in a succeeding chapter, in a general review of the author's works.

In January, 1774, one of the members died, and it was requested by the surviving relatives, that if not disorderly, Mr. Fuller should preach a funeral sermon, which he did; and on the 26th of the same month, the church, having previously held a day of fasting and prayer, gave him a unanimous invitation to become their pastor. Labouring under many disadvantages, among a poor people who possessed but a moderate acquaintance with divine truth, and agitated by religious disputes and speculations, he deeply felt the importance of the work to which he had been called. He was much and earnestly engaged in prayer to Him, who alone could qualify him for the undertaking, and confided with great delight in that promise: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." This, indeed, never ceased to be his refuge, in every renewed difficulty of his future life.

In the spring of 1775, February 19, after a probation of more than twelve months, he accepted the call of the church, and was ordained on the 3d of May, in that year. Mr. Hall of Arnsby, father to the present Mr. Robert Hall, delivered the charge, from Acts xx. 28. Mr. Pilley of Luton, and Mr. Emery of Little Stoughton, near Kimbolton, were also present and took part in the ordination.

They were led to inquire into the difference of sentiment which had occasioned the removal of their former pastor, and requested Mr. F. to state the particulars. Mr. Hall, for whose judgment Mr. F. always entertained the highest regard, expressed his satisfaction with this statement; and recommended it to him carefully to read *Edwards on the Will*, as the most able work on the subject of natural and moral inability. So little acquainted was he with authors, that though this book had been much read for several years, and reprinted in England, he confounded it with a work of Dr. Edwards of Cambridge, entitled, "Veritas Redux." He read this work, and approved of it, but it did not seem to bear on the object of Mr. Hall's recommendation. Nor did he, till 1777, discover his mistake. He got now into a different and far less profitable course of reading, though his mind continued much exercised, respecting the objects of the Christian ministry.—Bunyan, Gill, and Brine, were the authors he principally perused; and though he received instruction from them all, and most from Dr. Gill, he could not fail to observe, that their views on some subjects did not accord. Bunyan, while maintaining that individuals are chosen and predestinated to eternal life before the world began, solely in consequence of the sovereign grace of God, presents the invitations of the gospel to sinners without distinction, and dwells on the Father of mercy, stretching out his hands to the disobedient and gainsaying, having no pleasure in their death.

He could not reconcile these things; but judged the honest Bunyan inconsistent with himself, and with the scriptures, and thought the other writers clearer in their views. Becoming better acquainted however with the elder Puritans, as well as with some of Bunyan's cotemporaries, particularly Dr. Owen, he found them harmonize much more with him, than with Dr. Gill or Mr. Brine. He was not a stranger to those passages of the word of God which contain pathetic invitations to sinners; nor with many of those addressed to them by Jesus, during his personal ministry, inviting and beseeching the guilty to come to Him—setting forth the suitableness and freeness of Divine mercy—and the exceeding great and precious promises to every one who repents and believes the gospel. But such were the prejudices of his mind, that he supposed there must be two kinds of duties: one binding on man in

innocence, and on all his posterity : the other derived from Christ, and obligatory only on his people. He was not aware that the language of the scriptures concerning the inability of man to perform the latter, is just what men use in common discourse, to express resolute obstinacy and aversion to do any thing desired of them ; nor had he observed that it is always employed in scripture, not to palliate or excuse disobedience, but to describe the depth of human depravity.

In the autumn of 1775 he was in London, where he met with some writings on what was called "*The Modern Question ;*" which had been agitated many years before, by Mr. Maurice, pastor of the Independent congregation at Rowell,* and Mr. Wayman of Kimbolton. The former of these writers, being struck with the boldness of the innovation that could call in question the obligations of men to repent and believe the gospel, gave to the controversy this name, and pleaded with considerable success the sentiments afterwards adopted by Mr. Fuller. This was the first time in which he knew that these views had been the subject of debate. The proofs he there met with, that the addresses of John the Baptist, of Christ and the Apostles, to many who heard them, were directed to the impenitent and the ungodly, and that the object of their address was to excite them to flee from the wrath to come —to repent and live—to believe and be saved—very much impressed his mind. He set about examining the subject afresh, and the more he read, the greater doubts he entertained of the opinions he had been holding. He now perceived himself unsettled, on subjects which affected both his personal religion, and his ministry. He became very unhappy; but his distress produced close meditation, diligent searching of the Scriptures, and earnest prayer.

Those acquainted with his works need not be informed, that he soon became rooted and established in views opposite to those with which he set out ; and they will here learn the immediate occasion of his first treatise, entitled, "The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation," which was written in 1781, when he was only twenty-six years of age. This work, though he judged it afterwards inconclusive in some parts, and improved it, as he thought, in a subsequent edition, contains most important reasonings, and un-

*Mr. Maurice was also the author of a very estimable work, entitled "Social Religion Exemplified."

doubtedly displays talents which were afterwards generally acknowledged on the subjects that obtained greater and more universal attention.

On the 28th of May, 1776, the annual Association of ministers and messengers, belonging to the Baptist churches in Northamptonshire, was held at Olney, where Mr. Sutcliffe had been settled a few months before. This was the first interview that Mr. F. had with that excellent man; and from that day to the very last, an endearing and reciprocal friendship existed between them, the bonds of which were divided only for a short time, to be re-united and drawn more close for ever. It was then, too, that his acquaintance commenced with the late Dr. Ryland, of Bristol, who at that time had entered on his ministry at Northampton.

These young associates having begun to drink deep into the writings of President Edwards, introduced that excellent author, and others of the New England school, to the acquaintance of their new friend. His works, their conversation and inquiries, and the able observations of Mr. Hall of Arnsby, who in a supplement to his Association Letter of that year, on the doctrine of the Trinity, added some thoughts on the causes of salvation and damnation, closely connected with those subjects, served to enlarge and establish Mr. Fuller's mind, and to give a direction to his sentiments and preaching, discernible in all his future ministry and writings.

In December, 1776, Mr. Fuller married Miss Gardiner, who was a member of the church at Soham, and whose father resided chiefly at Newmarket. She was an amiable woman, singularly meek and retired in her deportment, and greatly beloved by her connections. By this first marriage, he had a numerous family, most of whom died in infancy, or in early life.

That he might give himself more unreservedly to the duties of his office, Mr. Fuller relinquished his business, the prosecution of which he found, as every one will find, who has scriptural views of the pastoral office, inconsistent with, or at least very unfavourable to, a becoming devotedness to its duties, and to an acquirement of the requisite qualifications. The support he received from the church, not through parsimony, but from their slender circumstances, became inadequate to provide for the expenses of a rising family. He set up a school in aid of his usefulness and his income; but after trying this for a

year, he did not succeed, and relinquished it in April, 1780. Discouraged by these things, though a man of a disinterested mind and frugal habits; but far more discouraged by the dissatisfaction which some expressed with his change of views, by the lukewarmness of many, and the little appearance of edification—and it is said, by unkindness on the part of a few—he was greatly depressed, and nearly brought down by sorrow and sickness to the grave.

He had preached occasionally at Kettering, where the church had been destitute of a pastor for a considerable time, and was heard by them with great profit and acceptance. It was soon discovered that they were desirous of his removal, and suggestions to that effect were conveyed to him through Mr. Wallis, their excellent deacon, of whom some further notice will be taken in a succeeding chapter.

In fact, though his connections at Soham were endeared to him by first impressions, and early attachments, it was not to be expected that a situation so unsuitable to his talents should eventually be preferred. The exalted Head of the church intended and prepared him for more extensive usefulness; and by a series of disappointments and discouragements was gradually paving the way for his removal to a wider sphere of action, where his great and varied talents might be exerted with more effect, in promoting the interests of religion, both at home and abroad.

Mr. Fuller had indeed the opportunity of leaving his situation much sooner than he did; but his attachment to the place where he had spent his early days, to the people with whom he was first united in Christian love, his disinterested regard for their welfare, the deep sense he entertained of his obligations, and of his own unfitness for a more important station, prevented his listening to the invitations of other churches, till he was in a measure compelled, by accumulated difficulties, to think of tendering his resignation.

The first intimation of this was given to the church at Soham, in July, 1781, which occasioned great sorrow of heart, and various consultations with ministers and others; till at length, being overcome by the prayers, the tears, and entreaties of the people, Mr. Fuller consented to stay with them another year.

When the period of his departure was drawing nigh, the scene became still more painful, and his courage fail-

ed him. The most unfeigned sorrow prevailed in almost every heart. "For my own part," said Mr. Fuller, "I found it exceeding difficult to go on in preaching, and to keep from weeping quite out. I hastened, as soon as worship was over, to get alone, and there to give full vent to all my sorrows. We had a private evening meeting, August 11th, 1782, which was more trying to me than the public services of the day. I saw a spirit in the church in general, which, had I seen a half a year ago, I could never have left them, come what would, whatever I do now. I went home to my house, with a heart full of distress, and my strength nearly exhausted with the work and weeping of the day.

"The next day, August 12, I devoted to fasting and prayer; and I scarcely remember such a day in my life, for tenderness and importunity in prayer. Two days after, I felt my spirits all the morning exceedingly depressed; but I got alone, and found a heart to pray with greater fervency than I had done before. It seemed as if I must have my petition granted, or I could not live. Nothing but the thoughts of an open door for greater usefulness in Christ's cause, and my having been so much engaged to pray for the coming of Christ's kingdom, could have kept me from dropping all opposition, and yielding to the desire of the church." He afterwards added, "I do hope the hand of God is in all this. I feel a secret longing to have my time, my soul, my all, devoted to Christ's interest, in some respects different from what I can here."

Mr. Fuller's delicate, prudent, Christian conduct, on this occasion, was very conspicuous. It is evident that his mind was greatly distracted with suspense and uncertainty; the apprehension of erring on the one hand, and of neglecting a call to greater usefulness on the other, threw him into perplexity and agitation. Unexpected considerations started suddenly upon him; he found he had been an instrument of doing more good, and that there was more attachment towards him among the people, than had hitherto been discovered. About thirty persons had joined the church, nearly as many were awakened under his ministry, and the last year was still more promising of usefulness and comfort. A conflict of contending passions raised as great a tumult within him, as perhaps the revolutions of empires ever wrought in an ambitious breast. In this dilemma he had recourse to counsel from friends, and

from meetings of ministers; the question whether he should leave the first scene of his usefulness, or occupy a larger, and in some respects, a more comfortable sphere, was referred by the church and by him, to arbitration. He corresponded with those whom he thought likely to give him good advice; but above all, he resorted on this occasion, to fasting, and prayer to the Father of lights. He did not, however, ascertain the path of duty so clearly as could be wished, and therefore concluded on staying a year longer at Soham. At the end of this period he made up his mind to remove, and all parties agreed that he should accept the invitation of the church at Kettering. On this decision, the church at Soham wept much, but said, "The will of the Lord be done."

CHAPTER II.

His Removal to Kettering—Domestic Afflictions—Ministerial Labours—Efforts in the Cause of Religious Liberty—Personal and Relative Afflictions—Counsel and Correspondence—Labours continued.

Among dissenting churches, where the right of choosing and retaining their own ministers is tenaciously regarded, there is always some danger of sacrificing the general good to the supposed claims of a particular society. And though Mr. Fuller was influenced by the purest motives, in prolonging his connection with the church at Soham, and had no worldly interest or ambition to gratify; yet it is pretty evident that a considerable part of his usefulness would have been lost, by complying with the wishes of the people and acknowledging their exclusive right to his services, had not Providence removed those scruples by imposing a necessity from which there could be no appeal.

In the early part of Mr. Fuller's public life, he had the happiness to become acquainted with the excellent Mr. Hall of Arnsby, whose peculiar delight it was, to encourage any promising talents which he discovered among his junior brethren in the ministry. Mr. Hall had long fixed his eye on Mr. Fuller, as likely to render important services to the cause of truth at some future period, and anxiously waited to introduce him to a situation more adapted to the range of his abilities. Amidst the difficulties at-

tending his early labours, both from the pulpit and the press, and those which arose out of his religious connections, Mr. Hall was his counsellor and friend; and to the latest hour of his life, Mr. Fuller cherished the memory of that eminent man with filial affection and reverence.

It has already been stated, that the Baptist church at Kettering was destitute of a pastor during the greater part of the time Mr. Fuller was exercising his ministry at Soham; and by the advice of Mr. Hall, they waited several years in the hope of obtaining him. In the mean time, Mr. Fuller occasionally visited and preached at Kettering, where his character and talents were held in the highest estimation, and where a more extensive field of usefulness invited his attention. The interval, however, was equally painful to himself and to his friends. The church at Soham was distressed by the fear of losing him, and the church at Kettering for the want of him, while he himself was equally distressed by the influence of contending motives. "Oh that it had never been my lot," said he, "to undergo the trial of a remove! Such things not only kindle my affections, but my fears. I am not without my fears, that if I do remove, I shall sin against the Lord; and rather than do that, I would go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. Truly his favour to me is better than life. On the other hand, I am not without hope that I should not offend the Lord in so doing. Yet if I go, I shall take upon me a greater charge than I have hitherto had; and that greater charge is attended with greater obligations to diligence and faithfulness. When greater opportunities of doing good are put into our hands, it is but having more talents to improve, and more souls to be accountable for. These things make me fear and tremble."

This painful conflict ended in October, 1782, when Mr. Fuller removed with his family to Kettering. He became pastor over that church on the 7th of October, in the following year. Mr. Evans, Mr. Sutcliffe, Mr. Ryland, jr. and several other ministers, assisted on the occasion. Mr. Hall delivered what is usually called the Charge, from the last words of Paul to Timothy: "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit."

On coming to this new situation, it was Mr. Fuller's good fortune to find in the senior deacon of his church, Beeby Wallis, Esq. one who duly appreciated his talents and his worth; and who, by his superior discernment and

the transcendent excellency of his character, acquired and employed the most extensive influence in conducting the concerns of the society for the mutual honour and benefit of the pastor and the flock. The connection from first to last, allowing for those incidents inseparable from the present imperfect state of human society, was a source of great comfort and satisfaction to both parties. And though the eminence of Mr. Fuller's pulpit talents could not fail to attract the attention of more numerous and more opulent congregations than that over which he presided; yet he never felt any temptation to leave a people to whom he was so much attached, and from whom he received so many proofs of affection and esteem, in order to gratify the pride of popularity, or the love of filthy lucre.

Alluding sometimes to what are called the more "respectable" churches in the connection, and observing the very humble situation of some of their ministers, whose influence and authority are absorbed in the more dignified office of the lay elders, he used to say, "I love to be where I can have plenty of elbow room;" and certainly he was inspired with sufficient terror of that worst of all animals, "a lord brother." Referring once to the salary he received for his ministerial labours, which was at no time fully adequate to his support, he remarked, "If I had consulted my temporal interest, I might have doubled what I have had for the last twenty years; yet I might not have been better off than I am now." He was therefore contented and happy in the situation which Providence had assigned him.

Mr. Fuller's removal to Kettering seems to have been the commencement of a distinct era in his public life. Here he was brought into closer union with a circle of ministers to whom he was greatly attached, and who were equally ardent with himself in the investigation of truth, if not alike successful in its defence and propagation. Here also his labours took a wider range, and were directed towards a more definite object.

Whether it be owing to a congeniality of mind, produced by frequent intercourse; to the collision of sentiment; to the influence which insensibly pervades the same society; to a spirit of emulation excited by comparison, or to any other assignable cause, it seems pretty evident that no great man ever existed alone in any age or country; and if others, equally eminent with himself be not produced by

his impulse, he is the means, somehow or other, of elevating from the common level many around him, and of imparting an energy of mind and character which otherwise they had not possessed. The social influence was never more sensibly felt, nor ever more visible than in the present instance; where the prophet's mantle seems to have descended successively, and to have endued each with a considerable portion of the same spirit, the same gifts and talents for usefulness.

The venerable Mr. Hall of Arnsby, the senior Mr. Ryland of Northampton, Mr. Fuller, and Mr. Pearce, to say nothing of Dr. Carey, and other surviving cotemporaries, were men of no ordinary standard, and they seem to have been planted together for no ordinary purpose. Each shone in his turn with unusual brightness; and that part of the religious hemisphere, more especially, in which they moved, has been long and successively irradiated with the splendour of their talents and piety.

The first two or three years after Mr. Fuller's removal to Kettering, were passed in great comfort and tranquillity. In 1784 he agreed, in conjunction with several other ministers, to devote the second Tuesday in every other month to private fasting and prayer, for the revival of religion in their respective congregations, which was soon followed with a monthly prayer meeting, for the extension of Christ's kingdom in the world. During this period he was much occupied in revising and publishing his treatise on Faith, written chiefly while he was at Soham, where he had to explore his path amidst theological difficulties, unaided and alone. In this employment, however, he found much satisfaction and delight, and entered upon it in the confidence of ultimate success, though he anticipated no small degree of opposition and reproach from his hyper-calvinistic brethren, who did not fail to represent his statements as adverse to the doctrines of grace.

Trials and afflictions of another kind still awaited him; and the first that seriously affected him was the death of a beloved daughter, at the age of six years and a half, on the 30th of May, 1786. He had buried several children in their infancy, but this was a heavier stroke, and it made a deep impression on his heart. The prospect of this bereavement occasioned an agony of grief which he was scarcely able to sustain, attended with a bilious fever which confined him to his bed for several days. When the conflict was over, his spirits revived; and calmly approaching

the grave of the departed, he dictated the following tender lines:

"The Child is not!—and I, whither shall I go?
My pensive soul thought thus to urge its grief:
To what retreat betake me, high or low,
Where burdened hearts might find some short relief.

Shall I betake me to the grove, or field,
Or walk, or hill, or dale, or grassy plain?
Alas, what joy can all creation yield!
Creation mourns where death and sorrow reign.

So far from easing, prospects aggravate;
Ah, *here* she walked—*there* ran—*there* plucked the opening flower:
Turn, turn away my eyes, nor irritate
The wound that's now too deep for earth to cure.

But stop....the child is not....hence will I go,
To God, who though he frowns, is still the same.
She was not mine, though fond I called her so;
He gave—He took away—I'll bless his name.

Look neither inward, on thy griefs to pore,
Nor outward, for relief in creature joys;
Look upward, to thy God, thence help implore,
And help will come, and good from ill arise.

Nor mourn to excess her loss, but say "'tis well;"
What matter when she died, if but to God.
If reared for Him, though young or old she fell,
His bosom is her last and blest abode.

Here oft she read of infant piety;
She read, and loved, and paused at every breath,
Till dire affliction wore her strength away,
And quenched her powers, and sealed her lips in death.

What then! her powers we trust do now expand;
Our views compared with her's are childish now.
She needs not little toys t'amuse her mind;
Christ, whom she sought, will be her all to know.

Surely her sorrows now to joy are turned,
Yes, sure her infant cries were heard and sped.
Her tender hopes, to blest fruition changed,
And all her fears in disappointment fled.

But must we part?—and can I bid farewel?
We must—I can—I have—I kissed her dust—
I kissed the clay-cold corpse, and bid farewel,
Until the resurrection of the just.

Return, my soul—the works of life attend—
A little while to labour here is given;
Meanwhile, a new attractive thou shalt find,
To draw thee hence, and fix thine heart in heaven."

These lines are not inserted for the sake of their poetic beauty; but because they serve, in an eminent degree, to develope the paternal character of their Author, and evince the strength of his sensibilities, notwithstanding the sternness of his general aspect. "Natural affection," says Melancthon, "is peculiarly forcible in minds of a superior order;" and he himself was an instance of the justness of the remark. When an eminent literary character called one day at his house to see him, instead of finding him as he expected, remote from his family, and secluded in his study, he was introduced to him, rocking his child's cradle with one hand, and holding a book in the other. It is also somewhere remarked of that illustrious statesman, Mr. Fox, that after having held the British Senate for hours together during the night, in delightful astonishment, charmed by the splendour of his talents, and the blaze of his overpowering eloquence, he might be seen the following morning at trap-ball with a little boy on the lawn, before his parlour window, and entering eagerly with him into all his juvenile amusements. It is by the facility with which superior minds descend from their elevation, and mingle with us in the ordinary occurrences of life, that under one view we estimate their greatness. And when we contemplate the Son of God himself, taking little children up in his arms and blessing them, we have before us a pattern of grace and condescension which may well put the highest mortal to the blush.

In the autumn of 1790, Mr. Fuller rode over to Everton in Bedfordshire, accompanied with his friend Mr. Sutcliffe, on a visit to the venerable Mr. Berridge. The interview was highly gratifying on all sides, though only of short continuance. The good old man having given his two friends a brief history of his life, they requested him to pray a few minutes before they parted. He, however, desired Mr. Fuller to engage in that exercise; and afterwards, without rising from his knees, he took up the petitions which had been offered, with great fervour and enlargement, and dismissed his brethren with the most cordial benedictions. Mr. Fuller returned home much refreshed by the interview, and ever after mentioned it as one of the happiest circumstances of his life.

Early in March, 1791, he lost his friend and counsellor, the Rev. Robert Hall of Arnsby; to whose memory he paid the last tribute of respect, by delivering the funeral oration at his grave. The death of this great man was severely

felt, especially by the ministers and churches in his immediate connexion, which afterwards looked up to Mr. Fuller as his successor in wisdom and ability. An Elegy which he composed on this occasion is closed with a wish, which is happily realized in him who bears the name, and inherits the virtues of his venerable predecessor.

> "——Here's Elijah's mantle: may there too
> A double portion of his spirit rest
> Upon us all; and might I be indulged
> In one more special wish, that wish should be,
> That *he who fills his father's sacred trust,*
> *Might share the blessings of his father's God,*
> *And tread his steps; that all may see and say,*
> *Elijah's spirit on Elisha rests.*"

The revolution of another year brought with it fresh trials, which exercised the faith and patience of the minister and the church at Kettering. Death removed an inestimable friend, who had been the principal means of introducing Mr. Fuller to his new situation, and whose cordial co-operation had afforded him the greatest assistance and encouragement in discharging the duties of the pastoral office. Mr. Beeby Wallis, who had been a deacon of the church four and twenty years, died on April 2d, 1792. In commemoration of so excellent a character, and the tender care with which he watched over the interests of religion in that society, which had been founded and prospered by the labours of his pious ancestors, Mr. Fuller composed the following epitaph, which was afterwards inscribed upon his tomb.

> "Kind sycamore, preserve beneath thy shade,
> The precious dust of him who cherished thee:
> Nor thee alone; a plant to him more dear,
> He cherished, and with fost'ring hand upreared.
>
> Active and generous in Virtue's cause,
> With solid wisdom, strict integrity,
> And unaffected piety, he lived
> Beloved amongst us, and beloved he died.
>
> Beneath an Allon-Bachuth, Jacob wept:
> Beneath thy shade we mourn a heavier loss."

About six months after the death of this valuable man, the Baptist Missionary Society was formed under the roof of his hospitable mansion, and warmly patronized by his pious widow. This important event afforded the most lively satisfaction, and called forth all the energies of their able Secretary. Here he found an object commensurate

with the magnitude of his powers; and with the most unwearied assiduity he devoted the remainder of his life to the advancement of its interests.

But providence was preparing a still greater trial of heart and intellect, in the affliction and removal of his amiable wife; and during the progress of the disease he was agonized with poignant grief. "My family afflictions," said he, "have almost overwhelmed me; and what is yet before me I know not! For about a month past, the affliction of my dear companion has been extremely heavy. On reading Job iv. 3—5 this morning, I was much affected. 'My words have upholden many: oh that now I am touched, I may not faint!' Oh Lord, I am oppressed: undertake for me. My thoughts are broken off, and my prospects seem to be perished. I feel, however, some support from such scriptures as these: 'All things work together for good to them that love God—God, even our own God, shall bless us—It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.' One of my friends observed, that it is difficult in many cases to know wherefore God contendeth with us. But I thought there was no difficulty of this kind with me. I have sinned against the Lord; and it is not a little affliction that will lay hold of me. Those words have impressed me of late: 'It was in my heart to chastise them.'"

Mrs. Fuller died Aug. 23, 1792, under very afflictive circumstances, scarcely in the possession of her reason; but when the trial came he was enabled to bear it with becoming fortitude.*

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* We copy from Dr. Ryland's Memoirs of Fuller, the following interesting letter, giving an account of Mrs. Fuller's decease. *Ed.*

"*Aug.* 15, 1792.

"Dear and honoured Father,

"You have heard, I suppose, before now, that my dear companion is no more! For about three months back, our afflictions have been extremely heavy. About the beginning of June she was seized with hysterical affections, which, for a time, deprived her of her senses. In about a week, however, she recovered them, and seemed better; but soon relapsed again: and during the months of July and August, a very few intervals excepted, her mind has been constantly deranged. In this unhappy state, her attention has generally been turned upon some one object of distress: sometimes, that she had lost her children; sometimes, that she should lose me. For one whole day, she hung about my neck weeping, for that I was going to die, and leave her. The next morning, she still retained the same persuasion; but, instead

He also found relief in devoting himself closely to writing; and it was during this period that he composed his Dialogues and Letters, on the fundamental principles of the gospel, and his celebrated work on the Calvinistic and Socinian systems, examined and compared, as to their moral tendency. The intenseness of his application brought on a paralytic affection in his face and head, which created considerable alarm among his friends; but happily it subsided in the course of a few months.

Fond of nature and the woodland scenery, Mr. Fuller had occasionally taken his late companion and a friend, in the autumnal season, to spend a day in wandering among the bushes of the forest, to gather nuts. Riding alone through Corby woods, a year after his bereavement, he

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of weeping for it, she rejoiced with exceeding joy. 'My husband,' said she, 'is going to heaven .... and all is well! ... I shall be provided for,' &c. Sometimes we were her worst enemies, and must not come near her; at other times, she would speak to me in the most endearing terms. Till very lately, she has been so desirous of my company, that it has been with much difficulty that I have stolen away from her, about two hours in the twenty-four, that I might ride out for the air, my health having been considerably impaired. But lately, her mind took another turn, which to me has been very afflicting. It is true, she never ceased to love her husband. 'I have had,' she would say, 'as tender a husband as ever woman had .... but you are not my husband!' She seemed, for the last month, really to have considered me as an impostor, who had entered the house, and taken possession of the keys of every place, and of all that belonged to her and her husband! Poor soul! for the last month, as I said, this and other notions of the kind have rendered her more miserable than I am able to describe. She has been fully persuaded, that she was *not at home;* but had wandered somewhere from it, had lost herself, and fallen among strangers! She constantly wanted to make her escape; on which account we were obliged to keep the doors locked, and to take away the keys. 'No,' she would say to me, with a countenance of inexpressible anguish, 'this is not my home .... you are not my husband .... these are not my children. Once I had a good home .... and a husband who loved me .... and dear children ... and kind friends .... but where am I now? I am lost! I am ruined! What have I done? Oh! what have I done? Lord, have mercy upon me!' In this strain, she would be frequently walking up and down, from room to room, bemoaning herself, without a tear to relieve her, wringing her hands, first looking upwards, then downwards, in all the attitudes of wild despair. You may form some conception what must have been my feelings, to have been a spectator of all this anguish, and at the same time, incapable of affording her the smallest relief.

"Though she seemed not to know the children about her, yet she had a keen and lively remembrance of those that were taken away. One day, when I was gone out for the air, she went out of the house. The servant, missing her, immediately followed, and found her in the grave yard, looking at the graves of her children. She

commemorated the afflictive event by dictating the following lines, which are not less affecting by their artless simplicity, than by the air of solemnity which they impart to the surrounding scene.

"I who erewhile was blessed with social joys,
With joys that sweetened all the ills of life,
And shed a cheerful light on all things round—
Now mourn my days in pensive solitude.

There once did live a heart that cared for me;
I loved, and was again beloved in turn;
Her tender soul would soothe my rising griefs,
And wipe my tears, and mix them with her own.
But she is not—and I forlorn am left,
To weep unheeded and to serve alone!

I roam amidst the dreary woods. Here once
I walked with her who walks no more with me.
The fragrant forest then with pleasure smiled.
Why wears it now a melancholy hue?
Ah me! nor woods, nor fields, nor aught besides,
Can grateful prove, where grief corrodes the heart.

God of my life, and guide of all my years!
To thee may I again my soul commend,
And in thee find a friend to share my griefs,
To give me counsel in each doubtful path,
And lead me on through every maze of life,
Till I arrive where sighs are heard no more!"

Having been a widower more than two years, he married Miss Coles, Dec. 30th, 1794, the only daughter of the Rev. William Coles, pastor of the Baptist church at Maulden in

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said nothing; but with a bitterness of soul, pointed the servant's eyes to the wall, where the name of one of them who was buried in 1783, was cut in the stone. Then, turning to the graves of the other children, in an agony, she, with her foot, struck off the long grass which had grown over the flat stones, and read the inscriptions with silent anguish, alternately looking at the servant and at the stones.

"About a fortnight before her death, she had one of the happiest intervals during the affliction. She had been lamenting, on account of this *impostor*, that was come into her house, and would not give her the keys. She tried, for two hours, to obtain them by force, in which time she exhausted all her own strength, and almost mine. Not being able to obtain her point, as I was necessarily obliged to resist her in this matter, she sat down and wept—threatened me, that God would surely judge me, for treating a poor helpless creature in such a manner! I also was overcome with grief: I wept with her. The sight of my tears seemed to awaken her recollections. With her eyes fixed upon me she said, ... 'Why, are you *indeed* my husband?' 'Indeed, my dear, I am!' 'Oh! if I thought you were, I could give you a thousand kisses!' '*Indeed*, my dear, I am your own dear husband.' She then seated herself upon my knee, and kissed me several times. My heart dissolved, with a mixture of

Bedfordshire. Averse to the usual manner of commemorating such events, and desirous of acknowledging God in all his ways, he invited only one or two pious and intimate friends, to unite with him in prayer and supplication for a blessing on the important connection which had been formed. By this second marriage Mr. Fuller had six children, three of whom died in infancy, and two only now survive to do honour to his memory. Mrs. Fuller, after giving to the public a new and uniform edition of his works, has since followed him to the grave, Oct. 29th, 1825.

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grief and joy. Her senses were restored, and she talked as rationally as ever. I then persuaded her to go to rest, and she slept well.

"About two in the morning, she awoke and conversed with me as rationally as ever she did in her life: said, her poor head had been disordered, that she had given me a deal of trouble, and feared she had injured my health; begged I would excuse all her hard thoughts and speeches; and urged this as a consideration—'Though I was set against you, yet I was not set against you as *my husband.*' She desired I would ride out every day for the air; gave directions to the servant about her family; told her where this and that article were to be found, which she wanted; inquired after various family concerns, and how they had been conducted since she had been ill; and thus we continued talking together till morning.

"She continued much the same, all the forenoon; was delighted with the conversation of Robert, whose heart also was delighted, as he said, to see his mother so well. 'Robert,' said she, 'we shall not live together much longer.' 'Yes, mother,' replied the child, 'I hope we shall live together for ever.' Joy sparkled in her eyes, at this answer: she stroked his head, and exclaimed, 'O bless you, my dear! how came such a thought into your mind?'

"Towards noon she said to me, 'We will dine together, to-day, my dear, up stairs.' We did so. But while we were at dinner, in a few minutes her senses were gone; nor did she ever recover them again! From this happy interval, however, I entertained hopes that her senses would return when she was delivered, and came to recover her strength.

"On Thursday, the 23d instant, she was delivered of a daughter, but was all the day very restless, full of pain and misery, no return of reason, except that, from an aversion to me which she had so long entertained, she called me 'my dear,' and twice kissed me: said she 'must die,' and 'let me die, my dear,' said she, 'let me die!' Between nine and ten o'clock, as there seemed no immediate sign of a change, and being very weary, I went to rest; but about eleven, was called up again, just time enough to witness the convulsive pangs of death, which in about ten minutes carried her off.

"Poor soul! What she often said is now true. She was *not* at home . . . . I am *not* her husband . . . these are *not* her children . . . but she has found her home . . . . a home, a husband, and a family better than these.

"It is the cup which my Father hath given me to drink, and shall I not drink it? Amidst all my afflictions, I have much to be thankful for. I have reason to be thankful, that though her intellects were so

Mr. Fuller's ministerial labours, though not distinguished by any remarkable success, were very highly esteemed, and procured for him an increasing degree of reputation and influence. Hitherto there had been another Baptist congregation at Kettering, over which Mr. Satchell, for many years, presided; but towards the close of 1795, he and his friends requested to be incorporated with the church under Mr. Fuller's care; and the union became a source of mutual satisfaction. Mr. Satchell was the au-

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deranged, yet she never uttered any ill language, nor was disposed to do mischief to herself or others; and, when she was at the worst, if I fell on my knees to prayer, she would instantly be still and attentive. I have also to be thankful, that though she had been generally afraid of death, all her life time, yet that fear had been remarkably removed for the last half year. While she retained her reason, she would sometimes express a willingness to live or die, as it might please God; and about five or six weeks ago, she now and then possessed a short interval, in which she would converse freely. One of our friends, who stayed at home with her on Lord's-days, says that her conversation, at those times, would often turn on the poor and imperfect manner in which she had served the Lord; her desires to serve him better; her grief to think that she had so much and so often sinned against him. On one of these occasions she was wonderfully filled with joy, on overhearing the congregation, while they were singing over the chorus, 'Glory, honour, praise, and power,' &c. She seemed to catch the sacred spirit of the song.

"I mean to erect a stone to her memory, on which will, probably, be engraved the following lines:

> The tender parent wails no more her loss,
> Nor labours more beneath life's heavy load;
> The anxious soul, releas'd from fears and woes,
> Has found her home, her children, and her God.

"To all this, I may add, that perhaps I have reason to be thankful for her removal. However the dissolution of such an union may affect my present feelings, it may be one of the greatest mercies both to her and to me. Had she continued, and continued in the same state of mind, (which is not at all improbable,) this, to all appearance, would have been a thousand times worse than death.

"The poor little infant is yet alive,* and we call her name *Bathoni;* the same name, except the difference of sex, which Rachel gave to her last born child. Mr. West preached a funeral sermon last night, at the interment, from 2 Cor. v. 1.

"I am, dear and honoured father,

"Yours, in great affliction,

"A. FULLER."

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* It died about three weeks afterwards.

thor of an ingenious work,* afterwards published by his Son, and which has passed through several editions. Some of the public journals have inadvertently attributed this performance to the pen of Mr. Fuller; but all that he did was to write a recommendatory preface, as a testimony of respect to the memory of his departed and amiable friend.

Preaching in the villages within a convenient distance, was an employment in which Mr. Fuller greatly delighted, and the solicitations of his friends afforded frequent opportunities. In the spring of 1796, a reputable grazier at Braybrook, in Northamptonshire, who has since emigrated to America, lost his eldest son, and requested Mr. Fuller to preach a funeral sermon at his interment. When the services were about to commence, the little meeting house in the village was found by far too small to contain the congregation; the weather, also, was too cold to admit of preaching in the open air, and no convenient place was at hand. An urgent request was presented to the aged vicar for the use of the parish church, presuming that the solemnity of the occasion, and the want of accommodation for the crowds which were flocking from all parts of the neighbourhood, would be admitted as some excuse for a violation of the Episcopal sanctuary, and that the canon law would for once relax a little of its severity in favour of the superior interests of religion and morality. The parent of the deceased youth was willing to engage for any pecuniary consequences that might ensue, while the preacher promised to make his best apologies to the bishop, if they should be demanded. The interment took place in the church yard; and the aged and infirm vicar, having performed the burial service at the grave, actually introduced the Nonconformist to his pulpit, and became himself a hearer, while Mr. Fuller delivered a most impressive discourse, from Jer. xxxi. 18—20, to a numerous and deeply affected audience. Should the time come, when Episcopalians and Dissenters shall behave towards each other as brethren, forgetting the differences and distinctions which subsist between them, in cases demanding the sacrifice of minor interests, a most important advantage would be gained to the cause of their common christianity.

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*Thornton Abbey: consisting of a series of letters on religious subjects, in 3 vols. 12mo.

When the service was over, the clergyman, whose name was Chapman, shook hands with the preacher before all the people, and thanked him for his serious and pathetic discourse; saying, "I hope that no ill consequences will befal either thee or me." It is but justice to add, that no unpleasant notice was taken of this singular occurrence by the bishop, though it happened to be no other than Dr. TOMLINE himself, who so soon afterwards wanted to abridge the provisions of the act of toleration. At a following visitation, however, the bishop inquired into the fact, which was freely admitted by the clergyman; and particularly asked whether the preacher prayed for the king; for possibly his lordship imagined that none but bishops pray for royalty. The answer was, "Yes, very fervently." And what did he preach about, said the diocesan. "Why, about the common salvation," was the reply. The bishop only added, that he must not do so again.

Mr. Fuller began to acquire considerable celebrity as an author, and some of his works were reprinted and circulated beyond the Atlantic. The American divines especially, having entered pretty deeply into theological controversy, regarded him as a very able polemic, and set a high value on his publications. Desirous of expressing their esteem for his talents and character, they conferred on him the honorary title of Doctor in Divinity.

In a letter to Dr. Hopkins of New-England, dated March 17, 1798, Mr. Fuller expressed himself in the following manner. "One of our ministers has told the world that a *diploma* was conferred on me by the College of New Jersey. I do not know that it was so, as I have received no direct account of it. If I had, I should have written them a respectful letter, expressive of my gratitude for their having offered such a token of respect, and acknowledging what is the truth, that I should esteem it as coming from that quarter which, beyond any other in the world, I most approved; but declining to accept it, partly because I have not those qualifications which are expected to accompany such titles, and partly because I believe all such titles *in religion* to be contrary to our Lord's command, Matt. xxiii. 8." The ill-fated diploma was, nevertheless, at length received, after it had been taken by the French on its passage from America, and sent over to England by the agents of the French government; but it was never appropriated.

Early in 1798 the country was much alarmed by the prospect of a threatened invasion, and Mr. Fuller very feelingly participated in the general concern. Much as he disapproved of many of the measures of administration, he was a most decided friend to his country, not merely on the common principles of political patriotism, but from higher motives. With the amiable Cowper, he could truly say, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still." At this period, in particular, he was under "strong apprehensions that a time of sore trial was at hand, and that the meditated attack would prove an awful test to great multitudes of professed christians. I pray God, says he, that it may be averted, and that this cup may pass from us. If however such a calamity be permitted, it may be for the sake of destroying our antichristian corruptions; but who shall live when God doth this! Oh that we might all forget every character but that of the christian, and be only attentive to our immediate duty! 'Seek the peace of the city wherein ye dwell,' said the prophet to the captives in Babylon; 'and pray to the Lord for it.' Yes, even of that city which oppressed them and oppressed the world. However advantageous it might be to the Jewish captives, that Babylon should be overturned, they were to do nothing to promote the design of Cyrus; but attend to duty in their own little circle, and leave God to manage things on the larger scale."

The close of this year was marked by the commencement of a domestic calamity, which in its progress affected him more deeply than any other event in the course of his whole life. His nerves were naturally firm and unshaken; he seldom gave away to paroxysms of grief, scarcely indeed in any case where religious principle had not a deep concern; and when this was blended with other interests, the affliction became too poignant to be long endured.

Writing to an intimate friend on this trying occasion, he says, "My heart is almost broken. Let nothing that I said, grieve you; but make allowance for your afflicted and distressed friend. When I lie down a load almost unsupportable depresses me. Mine eyes are kept waking; or if I get a little sleep, it is disturbed; and as soon as I awake, my load returns upon me. Oh Lord, I know not what to do; but mine eyes are up unto thee. Keep me, oh my God, from sinful despondency. Thou hast promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love thee: fulfil thy promise, on which thou hast caused thy servant to hope. Oh, my God, this child which thou hast given me in

charge is wicked before thee, is disobedient to me, and is plunging himself into ruin. Have mercy upon him, oh Lord, and preserve him from evil. Bring him home to me, and not to me only, but also to thyself.

"If I see the children of other people, it aggravates my sorrow. Those who have had no instruction, no pious example, or warnings, or counsels, are often seen to be steady and trusty: but my child, who has had all these advantages, is worthy of no trust to be placed in him. Oh, my God, take away his heart of stone, and give him a heart of flesh; oh, give him a broken and sincere heart. I am afraid he will go into the army, that sink of immorality; or if not, that being reduced to extremity, he will be tempted to steal. And oh, if he should get such a habit, what may not these weeping eyes witness, or this broken heart be called to endure! Oh, my God, whither will my fears lead me? Have mercy upon me, a poor unhappy parent: have mercy upon him, a poor, ungodly child. Oh Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me!"

About ten days afterwards, when the scene began to brighten, he sings of mercy and judgment. "I found much relief," says he, "in prayer, and was persuaded that God would hear me, and bring it to pass. I have now much cause to be thankful, though my chief concern is not accomplished. I must go at last to Leicester and Nottingham, to collect for the mission, but my strength and spirits are so broken with what I have suffered this last week, that I feel almost unable to undertake any thing. How soon the stoutest heart is appalled by trouble! I never before perceived the force of those words in Isaiah lxv. 23, 24, which seem to be a prophecy of the latter day glory. As ministers and as parents, we appear to labour almost in vain: we bring forth children for trouble, and our prayers are not answered on their behalf. But *then* the labours of the Lord's servants shall be successful; children shall be converted in early life, and prayer bear a quick return of blessings in variety."

The particulars of this grievous affliction, which the Editor could not prevail upon himself to lay before the reader, are detailed with sufficient minuteness in another publication. It is well remembered, that Mr. Fuller himself abstained from mentioning the subject, except only to two or three of his most intimate friends; the recollection filled him with so much bitterness, that he was often compelled, as he said, to seek relief in trying to forget his

trouble, and turning his attention to other subjects. With various alternations of hope and fear, his mind was exercised for several years by the unhappy conduct of his eldest son; till at length, in the spring of 1809, the hope that he had obtained mercy in his dying hour, assuaged the grief of the bereaved and disconsolate parent.

No man's religious sentiments were more constantly liable to misrepresentation than Mr. Fuller's, though scarcely any one had the faculty of rendering them more intelligible, or of placing them in a stronger light. When he insisted so successfully on the gospel being "worthy of all acceptation,' the hyper-calvinists represented him as an Arminian; and after his controversy with the deists and Socinians, others as perversely said that he had given up the doctrine of the atonement, and of endless punishment. A rather singular instance of this kind occurred in the summer of 1799, the sequel of which shows in what manner Mr. Fuller was accustomed to treat an evil report, and may serve as a warning to those who take pleasure in aspersing the principles or the characters of others.

A young Independent minister in Northamptonshire had heard that Mr. Fuller denied certain fundamental doctrines, and went down to Scotland and spread the report among some friends at Aberdeen, who wrote to Mr. Fuller on the subject. On the minister's return, his apology was, that "he did not circulate the report which he had heard, he only inquired whether it was true," and should be sorry if Mr. Fuller's mind was hurt by it. In the following extracts from his reply, it will be seen what Mr. F. thought of such inuendoes, and of the distinction pleaded in defence.

"I cannot find time," says he, "to contradict every idle tale, nor have I any inclination to do so. By letting it take its course, I shall be better able to distinguish friends from enemies. If a friend hears it, and fears lest there should be some truth it, he will write me a line, and I shall give him satisfaction. If an enemy hears it, he will report it, and let him report it. A friend in Edinburgh has indeed informed me, that a person from England said it was reported, that I had changed my sentiments on certain important subjects. I replied that I was not surprised; but he might rest assured there was no truth in it, and that he was at liberty to say so in any form he thought proper. Having thus, as I supposed, sufficiently set the matter straight, I thought little more about it from that

time to this. You may perceive, therefore, that my mind has not been greatly 'hurt' by the report. My views of the atonement, and of future punishment, are the same as when I wrote my letters on Socinianism.

"If you heard the report you mention, I do not blame you for suspecting that there might be some truth in it. Friendship itself might have feared; but friendship, and even justice, would either have dropped me a line of inquiry, or have remained silent on the subject, till farther light had been cast upon it. At least, it would have forborne to inquire at a *distance from home*, after the truth of a report which originated in your neighbourhood. 'Great men,' you say, 'have fallen;' yes, greater and better than either of us; but it does not follow from hence, that we should lightly take up an evil report against another. You should not have reported your doubt, my brother, where there was no probability of obtaining information on the subject, but merely of making work for me to contradict you.

"But you only 'inquired,' it seems. Ask an English tradesman who has connections in Scotland, what he would think of a brother tradesman, who, having heard that he was certainly on the point of stopping payment, should go immediately to Edinburgh and Aberdeen, amongst his creditors, and inquire into the truth of the report! The suspected party might have it in his power to prevent such a report doing him an injury, and so might not think it worth his while to prosecute the libeller; *but what would he think of him?*

"I have no wish to bear hard upon a young minister; but if you think my good opinion of any account; or let that be as it may, if you wish for peace in your own mind, there is but one course open to you; and that is, without any farther attempts to apologize for what will admit of no apology, frankly to acknowledge that you have done that to a brother, which you would not be willing he should do to you, and that, therefore, you are sorry for it. This would be to your honour, and would raise you much in my esteem. The matter would then go no farther than to the few who are already acquainted with it; but if you go about to palliate, and appeal to this and that friend, whether you are not blameless, it will only be making bad worse. It is also very possible that my Edinburgh correspondent may insert my letter to him in some magazine, unless I desire him not to do so. Should this be the case, though I have

made no mention of your name, nor cast a single reflection on the reporter, yet as it will be known to have proceeded from you, it may operate to your disadvantage."

The report being traced to its source, by a circuitous route, was found to have originated in the misapprehension of a single sentence, contained in a sermon which Mr. Fuller had delivered at Birmingham; and like many other idle or wilful mistakes, it was magnified till it amounted to a denial of the efficacy of the atonement. On making this discovery, Mr. Fuller addressed the following letter to the editor of a public journal, who had thus misrepresented his sentiments, in order to subserve the detested cause of Socinianism.

"Sir, you once informed me, if I remember right, that any thing I might send for the *Universalist Miscellany* would readily be inserted. This day, (June 5th, 1799,) I had the second volume of that work put into my hands, and which I had not seen before. In page 39 I met with the following passage, in an extract of a letter from Birmingham. 'Mr. Fuller, in a sermon at Cannon-street meeting, asserted, that the most pungent reflections of the miserable in hell were and would be, to remember that Christ died for them.'—Now sir, I affirm, that this is a falsehood. It is very possible that I might assert, that the most pungent reflections of the miserable were and would be, *that they had rejected the gospel way of salvation.* The other expression I am certain I did not use, nor do I believe what it would import. I think this circumstance ought to make you cautious of printing things from hearsay. I may add, that whatever a minister may advance in the pulpit, it ought not to be printed, without its being first shown to him, and deliberately avowed by him. By inserting the above in your next number, you will evince your regard to truth, and do justice to your well-wisher, A. F."

Mr. Fuller's multiplied and arduous engagements, which would have been too much for almost any other man, did not often produce discouragement; yet there were times in which his ardent mind felt oppressed by the accumulated load. In March, 1800, when engaged in controversy, and also in compiling his Memoirs of Mr. Pearce, he was solicited to give his assistance to a new periodical work; but being obliged to decline it, he tenderly expressed himself in the following manner:

"My labours *will* increase, without any consent on my part. As to Magazines, there are several to which I con-

tribute, for the sake of the mission and other public interests; and through such a number of objects as press upon me daily, my own vineyard, my own soul, my family, and congregation are neglected. Every journey I take, only makes way for two or three more; and every book I write, only occasions me to write others, to explain or defend it. All is vanity and vexation of spirit. I gave my heart to know wisdom: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. Some are pressing me to write more largely on the mediation of Christ; and others, to review the second edition of Mr. Booth's Glad Tidings. Controversies perplex me; and I am already engaged with a gross and subtle sophist. My northern correspondents are ever raising objections against my views of faith, &c.; all of which I could answer, but cannot get time. I have sent your remarks to my friend at Edinburgh; they will serve as a tub for the whale to play with, and perhaps for a time he will let me alone.

"Pearce's Memoirs are now loudly called for—I sit down almost in despair, and say, That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is lacking cannot be numbered. My wife looks at me, with a tear ready to drop, and says, 'My dear, you have hardly time to speak to me.' My friends at home are kind, but they also say, 'You have no time to see or know us, and you will soon be worn out.' Amidst all this, there is, 'Come again to Scotland—come to Portsmouth—come to Plymouth—come to Bristol'—

"Excuse this effusion of melancholy. My heart is willing to do every thing you desire, that I can do; but my hands fail me. Dear brother Ryland complains of old age coming upon him, and I expect old age will come on me, before I am really old. Under this complicated load, my heart has often of late groaned for rest, longing to finish my days in comparative retirement."

The weight of these oppressive cares, however, did not prevent his feeling the most anxious concern for the preservation of civil and religious liberty, whenever its interests seemed to be in danger; and early in the year 1800 his zeal and activity were called into exercise on their behalf. An alarm was spread, that a bill was preparing to be brought into parliament, founded on a Report which had originated with the bishop and clergy of the diocese of

Lincoln, complaining that great irregularities had arisen out of the practice of Village Preaching, and that the Toleration Act had been perverted by persons taking out a license to preach, merely for the purpose of being exempt from civil and military service; though the project had chiefly in view the restriction of the itinerant labours of the Methodists and others, which proved an annoyance both to the indolent and the active enemies of christianity.

It is gratefully recollected that the mischievous project was defeated, and that it eventually led to an enlargement, instead of an abridgment, of the Act of Toleration: nevertheless, as much of what transpired at that period is illustrative of the state of the established church, of the means employed in its defence, of the spirit of the anti-evangelical clergy, and of the rapid progress of dissent, the surest guarantee of our liberties; the active and energetic interference of the Secretary of the Baptist Mission, will be briefly noticed in the following paragraphs.

In a letter respectfully addressed to a distinguished member of the senate, since retired from public life, Mr. Fuller observes, "The object of the Report, lately put into my hands, appears to be, to furnish a pretext for abridging religious liberty, in reference to Village Preaching. It is drawn up with great caution, and an affected moderation towards the privileges of Dissenters. Much is said of other evils, as well as that of *village preaching;* but if *that* evil had not existed, nothing I am persuaded would have been said or done concerning any others. This is the eye sore, for the removal of which every thing else is introduced as a cover. Dissenters are allowed in this Report to be decent and sober people, and all the complaint is made of the "wandering tribes" of Methodists. What then have the Methodists done, to deserve the restraint of the legislature? Have they not wrought much good by their wanderings? There may be some things among them which we do not approve; but still we should be very sorry to see their religious liberties abridged. The Act of Toleration might not originally be intended to include them; but if it were now construed so as to exclude them, the consequence would be that they must become Dissenters, in order to be comprehended under its provisions.

"The clergy complain in their Report, of the small number of worshippers in their diocese, and well they may; for those counties are almost in a state of heathenism; not owing indeed to village preaching, but rather to the want of

it. Huntingdonshire, Rutland, Lincolnshire, and the Isle of Ely, are remarkable for profaneness, beyond any other district in the kingdom; yet the clergy have nearly had these counties to themselves, there being very few Dissenters in them. Why then do they want to punish us for the effects of their own remissness?

"If there are to be no places licensed for public worship, which are occupied as dwelling houses, it will seriously affect great numbers of the branches of our congregations, forty or fifty of whom meet together for worship on a Lord's day evening, and at other times. If no ministers are eligible to be licensed before the age of twenty three, and until they are pastors of congregations; what are we to do with probationers, and how are our young men to be formed for the ministry but by exercise? If it be left with the magistrates to withhold licenses for either places or persons, they being generally clergymen, we shall have very little justice done us.

"You will excuse, dear Sir, the freedom of these remarks. I cannot persuade myself that you, or any friend to evangelical religion, will concur in such an enactment, but will rather use all your influence against it. Is it not manifest, that evangelical religion is the only thing that will suffer by this bill? The clergy talk of deism and Socinianism; but they will not be affected by it. What then has evangelical preaching done against the state, to provoke this treatment? It cannot be that it fosters political principles which give offence; for the friends of evangelical preaching, both in towns and villages, are not the men who have distinguished themselves in political disputes. Nor has political dispute any thing to do among village preachers. Neither do they who go into the villages, so far as my knowledge extends, ever rail at the clergy, or at the church; they direct their whole aim in promoting repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"The whole of the projected measure appears to originate in the jealousy of the anti-evangelical clergy, who wish to curry favour with the state, that they may be permitted once more to renew the work of persecution, from which for upwards of a century they have, sorely against their inclination, been compelled to desist.

"The Toleration Act may have been infringed by persons obtaining licences to preach, merely to be exempt from civil offices: but if no persons were eligible to apply for a license, without the recommendation of three respectable

ministers of their own denomination, it would sufficiently guard against the abuse. And if any have gone into the villages, and railed against the clergy or the church, there is no remedy for this but what would equally affect others. Let the clergy act in character, and it will not hurt them, but fall on the head of the accusers."

The eminent individual to whom this appeal was made, expressed his opinion that the Dissenters and Methodists need not be at all alarmed, for that no such measure as the one in contemplation, would be likely to meet with support from the legislature, or be countenanced by the generality of the clergy. But should it be introduced into parliament, he conceived that in resisting it to the utmost of his ability, he should promote the true interest of the established church, no less than those of the dissenting body, which were in his view inseparably united.

Happily the apprehensions which gave occasion to this correspondence were never realized; the government, though it listened to the fears of the clergy, did not suffer itself to be influenced by them. The Dissenters, grateful for the enlargement and additional security given to their privileges, have not pressed forward with any new petitions, nor attempted to embarrass the councils of state by taking a decided part in any public question. The repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts cannot be long delayed, but they have shown no signs of impatience; and amidst the career of missionary labours, more important objects have engaged their attention.

Mr. Fuller was subject to an affection of the lungs, especially from exposure to easterly winds, which never failed to produce some degree of inflammation. With all his constitutional strength and firmness, he was never able to meet this enemy; but whenever the wind was in that quarter, he used to confine himself to his room for weeks together, not daring to venture out. In August, 1801, he had a severe attack of this kind, of which he gave the following account in a letter to a friend, and of the state of his mind under the affliction:

"I suppose you will feel anxious to know how I am, and so will many whom I cannot gratify. Indeed I can hardly inform you of my present state: but many have whispered that I am just in the situation of poor Pearce, when he had been at Harborough. The means used to remove the cough and fever, have brought me well nigh to the grave; and the cause is not removed. I can just walk

from one room to another, and creep up and down stairs; but my strength and spirits are gone.

"In reviewing my past life, I feel much cause for shame and self-abasement. I have been an unprofitable servant; and if the Lord discharge me from his work, he is righteous. Yet while I feel abased, my hope, as a poor perishing sinner, is fixed upon the Rock of Ages. Into his hands I have committed my spirit; willing to live or die, as it pleaseth him. Pray for me, that I may be fitted for whatever is before me."

His ardent affection for the memory of the excellent Mr. Pearce of Birmingham, expressed itself on every occasion; and being still heavily afflicted, he repeats on the 5th of September following, similar sentiments and feelings. "I am," says he, "exceedingly feeble: the cough is not removed, and the fever remains, with loss of appetite, strength and spirits. I am teased with blisters about the stomach; but perhaps they are necessary. They still say, I am going after Pearce. Well, if it should be so, I hope to go whither he is gone. I feel at present calm, and resigned to the will of God. I remember at the time when that dear man was wasting away at Plymouth, I was riding outside the coach from London; and turning my back on the company, I wept for several miles, and put up this prayer: Let the God of Samuel Pearce be my God!"

Mr. Fuller's sickness at this time, though nearly fourteen years before the final attack, bore so strong a resemblance in some respects to his last dying illness, that it seemed like a foretaste of that event. The tidings having reached Scotland, produced general alarm amongst his friends in that quarter: and to relieve their anxiety, Dr. Stuart kindly undertook a journey to Kettering. On first receiving the intelligence, this distinguished friend expresssed himself as follows: "With what feelings I perused your letter this morning, He only knows who knows my heart. I had some painful anticipation from a letter which our afflicted friend wrote to me August 5th. I heard no more, and remained anxious ever since. Previous to your letter, I had just perused the Periodical Accounts at one sitting, with such emotions as I scarcely ever felt; my heart drawn forth, I know not whether with greater and more tender affection to the author of the Preface, or to the chosen and devoted band in Bengal. Alas, thus prepared, how deeply am I cut, even to the quick, by your intelligence. Well—see

him I must. I cannot resist the impulse of my soul, to obtain the melancholy satisfaction of beholding his face, and of knowing what is done." He did so; and Mr. Fuller was taken by surprise, not expecting to see a friend from such a distance, and on such an errand. Ill as he was, however, he could not help indulging in a little sarcastic wit with his northern friend, who, though he highly approved of the Baptist Mission, and aided the contribution to its funds by his zealous exertions, was still attached to the Sandemanian faith and worship. Mr. Fuller accordingly remarked that the Scotch Baptists, though they had not themselves undertaken any missionary enterprise, yet like the Quakers in 1745, they had bought waistcoats for the soldiers who engage in this warfare, and were entitled to the thanks of the Society.

The complaint continuing for some time, Mr. Fuller's pulpit was supplied by other ministers. During this painful interval, he contemplated the total suspension of his labours with all that anxiety which showed that the work of the ministry was his delight, and that he had not entered upon it in the spirit of a hireling. "I seldom now hear a sermon, (says he,) without being somewhat sensibly affected with my present affliction; not so much from what I feel in the body, as from having my mouth shut from speaking the things that pertain to the kingdom of God. I feel a kind of earnest of what it would be if I should be wholly laid aside. These sensations are generally accompanied with desires to return to the work of the Lord. Two things of late have been the object of private prayer: first, that I might be restored to the work of the ministry; and secondly, that I might resume it with a double portion of God's Holy Spirit, in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ."

Recovering slowly, from his illness for several months, and still incapacitated for public services, his pen was almost incessantly employed; and whether in sickness or in health, he must delight himself in meditating upon divine truth. Corresponding with his friends, writing pieces for various periodical publications, and preparing works for the press, left him scarcely an hour for relaxation, or opportunities for any of those attentions which his personal comfort might require. In one week, during his confinement, he wrote three essays for the magazines, despatched twenty letters by the post, and prepared about fifty other

pages for the press. "Pretty well," as he remarked, "for a sick man."

Applications like these, especially in times of health, were with him no other than the ordinary routine of business. His faculties were always on the stretch, never thinking of repose or rest, while there was any thing within the compass of his ability to accomplish. Dec. 30, 1801, the disorder had so far abated as to enable him in part to resume his public labours; and on sending a quantity of manuscript to a friend, he says, "Though far from being well in health, yet you see, my heart, and head, and hands never lie still. I sometimes think I shall not be long with you: but while I am here, I must be doing as long as I can. I do not know that my exertions do me any harm. Next Lord's day I am to preach the annual sermon to our young people, from 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. These sermons have been more blessed than any others I have preached."

So desirous was he of giving religious instruction to the rising generation, that the magnitude of his other engagements did not prevent his adopting the most simple expedient; and while he possessed the tongue of the learned, to speak a word to him that is weary, he at the same time condescended to become a teacher of babes. The following, among others, is a striking instance of this sort of humble piety, which does honour to the memory of this great man:

"I have been thinking of a plan," says he, in the letter above quoted, "for disseminating truth among our little lacemakers. A quantity of white wrapping-paper is used in the sale of small parcels of lace thread; so I will draw up a number of little hymns, the most impressive that I can either find or make, and get them printed on one side of the paper. Then every child that comes for a small quantity of thread, will find it wrapped up in a paper containing a short impressive hymn addressed to its heart."

Sickness and death were frequent visitors in Mr. Fuller's family; and not long after he himself was recovered, he was called to endure another bereavement. These repeated strokes were severely felt; and as on former occasions, so on this, he pours out his soul in the melting strains of poetry. Observing his dear little girl, the day before she died, looking steadfastly on her parents, he exclaims—

"Sweet Babe! why fix thy wishful eyes on us?
We feel thy load—but cannot give thee aid!
Didst thou know aught, we would direct thine eyes
To HIM, from whom alone thy help must come.
But, what shall we do now?—We will convey
Thy looks expressive, up to Heaven's high throne!
And plead on thy behalf with HIM, who gave
A blessing, when on earth, to babes in arms.

On babes in arms, our Jesus laid his hands;
And at the instance, too, of others' prayers.
Were they not parents? Be it so, or not;
If others' suit prevailed, why should not ours?
A mother pleaded once a daughter's cause,
And, 'Be it to thee even as thou wilt,'
Was Jesus' answer!

Oh, our Redeemer, and our God, our help
In tribulation—hear our fervent prayer!
To THEE we now resign the sacred trust,
Which thou ere while didst unto us commend.
Soon we must quit our hold, and let her fall:
Thine everlasting arms be then beneath!
In THEE a refuge may she find in death,
And in thy bosom dwell when torn from ours!
Into thy hands her spirit we commit,
In hope ere long to meet, and part no more!"

During the following winter his lungs continued to be much affected, attended with frequent attacks of bilious fever; so that he was able to preach but little, and complained of being very susceptible of cold from east winds and damp air. In March, 1802, he ventured to attend an ordination in Bedfordshire, and suffered a relapse. A friend suggested that he required some repose. He replied, "Yes, I do indeed want repose; but so long as I am in the world there is none for me. I am worse after my journey than I was before, and am ill able to endure an additional load of labour; yet I am inundated with letters from Scotland and India. Two of my northern correspondents have attacked me with sheetful upon sheetful, and sent me also Mr. M'Lean's new publication; but I have thrown the letters aside for the present, and placed the book upon the shelf without looking at it, nor do I know that I shall be able to read it for some months to come. Here is a volume of missionary intelligence, which requires immediately to be sent into various quarters; and I must take my work moderately, or I can do nothing at all. I had a good deal of fever last night." The church at Kettering began to be so much alarmed about the state of his health, that they held special prayer-meetings for his recovery.

In the month of August he was so far restored as to be able to undertake a second missionary tour into Scotland. Being detained all day at Market Deeping, waiting for a passage across the Humber, he drew from his pocket Mr. M'Lean's publication, and began to examine it. Having done so, he exclaimed, "What a hopeless mass of misconception and misrepresentation! Lo, that which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is lacking cannot be numbered."

During the present year Mr. Fuller was consulted in a case of some difficulty, respecting a minister's separation from his people, where considerable dissatisfaction prevailed, but without coming to a decided or unanimous wish for his removal. The sentiments which Mr. Fuller delivered on this occasion, evinced the sacred regard he entertained for the liberty and independence of the churches, and the importance he attached to an upright and disinterested conduct in their pastors. His decision may serve as a guide to other ministers in similar circumstances; or if not, it will at least be thought deserving of their serious attention.

"It is a principle," says Mr. Fuller, "from which I can never recede, that when a minister has lost the confidence of his people, he has lost the power of doing them good, and must on no account be imposed upon them. Why do we talk of a church having the right of choosing their own minister, if other ministers are to interfere with the exercise of that right? Even though the pastor may happen to be right in the dispute, and the people wrong, they must suffer the consequences of their error; but our hand must not be to impose a minister upon them beyond their own free choice." On another occasion he observed, "The best minister in the world should not wish to stay with a people contrary to their desire. Christ himself, when the Gadarenes entreated him to depart, departed out of their coasts." And when he heard of a minister who lorded it over God's heritage, setting the people at defiance, and boasting of his independence, he exclaimed, "I tremble to think what many ministers would prove, if once their worldly circumstances rendered them independent of the people. The Lord keep us dependent on himself! That ministers are made for churches, and not churches for ministers, I infer from 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, as well as from the nature of things. But I think the same of rulers with respect to nations, who yet when in office, and executing

the laws with fidelity, must and ought to be obeyed; and I do not know that I have ever encouraged any church to withstand or neglect their pastor, in the faithful execution of his office."

With all his inflexibility in the cause of righteousness and truth, he was still the advocate of peace and unity, and deeply lamented the divisions and separations which sometimes occurred in his own connections. A very intimate friend of his, after enjoying many years of peace and comfort, was anxious to leave his situation, in consequence of some unkindness which he had received from the people, and a want of exertion on their part, which tended, as he conceived, to impede his usefulness. Mr. Fuller, who narrowly watched the progress of events, and viewed every thing with godly jealousy, addressed to his friend an expostulation, equally remarkable for its tenderness and fidelity; and though he afterwards acknowledged, that in some respects both himself and the people had erred, in the view they had taken of the subject, the following extracts, which do so much credit to his discernment, can scarcely be read without interest, and may serve as a caution to ministers who are tempted too readily to leave a pious and affectionate people, on account of present difficulties.

"You know I love you; and because I love you, I must be free and open in imparting my fears concerning you. I am afraid, then, that the *whole* of this has not originated in the love of God, and a desire to be and do that which shall be most for his glory and the good of his cause, but in certain uneasinesses which attend your present situation, and which will more or less attend all situations in this world, accompanied with some flattering prospects of worldly prosperity. I do not pretend to be certain that this is the case, because I do not know another's heart: but so far as my observation extends, it appears so to me. Now if this be the case, the present is, to you, an hour of temptation, sent to try you. If you comply with the temptation, you may be unhappy to the end of life. Say not, this and that minister have removed, and improved their circumstances. Were I as intimate with them as I am with you, I would say the same to them, for I suspect the same.

"My heart bleeds to think of the state of some of our churches: the state of your congregation especially affects me the more, when I recollect that only two years ago, God seemed to be working a great work among you, and

many were gathered into his fold. And now, how will you answer that question: 'With whom hast thou left these few sheep in the wilderness?'

"When a minister is unable to maintain his family, something may be said in favour of his removal. But when it is far otherwise, what can be said? You have had a peaceable and affectionate people; they have not been without their failings, nor you without yours; but you have learned to bear with each other. Be assured that you will never be so loved in any other place; and it is doubtful whether you will continue long where you are going, unless it be merely from worldly considerations, and this will afford you neither happiness nor peace. There is no considerable body of serious Christians among them, though there may be two or three excellent individuals; and besides, a spirit of Antinomianism pervades the neighbourhood. Where you are, you are respected and beloved: but there you will be in danger of being blown upon by the flesh-flies of carnal professors. Do not be offended—do not be grieved with your affectionate friend."

In the summer of 1803, the country was again threatened with a French invasion, more formidable than the first, and Mr. Fuller readily became one of the alarmists. He accordingly entered into a public subscription for the defence of the country, preached and printed a sermon in support of the measure, and encouraged the young men of his congregation to enter the volunteer corps, which in the town of Kettering amounted to upwards of two hundred. Some of his brethren thought the latter proceeding a little too *militaire* for a minister of the gospel; but he considered a general armament to be "wise and necessary," more on account of the prevalence of internal disaffection, than of any immediate danger to be apprehended from a foreign enemy. His fears were also excited by a recent attempt to assassinate the king in his procession to the house of lords, and by the report of an intended insurrection. He had heard, and he believed, that at the time of the abortive regicide "there was a strong party of malcontents ready to seize the tower, another to take possession of the bank, and a third to disperse the parliament. Also that all the aristocrats, and ministers of every denomination, were to be put to death after the French fashion; and that one of the standing toasts of the revolutionary party was, A guillotine large enough to be worked by the waters of the Thames!"

No wonder, therefore, that he felt so deeply, and expressed himself so decidedly as he did on this occasion. He admitted, indeed, that the measures of Mr. Pitt, in silencing the clamours of the people, and preventing the freedom of debate, by his imperious enactments, gave just occasion for dissatisfaction; and that it was not inconsistent in a good man to utter his complaints, when he felt himself aggrieved. "Paul himself did so before the magistrates at Philippi; but habitual 'murmurers and complainers,' he observes, are those who 'walk after their own lusts.'" It happened, too, about that time, that an Antinomian preacher in Leicestershire had rendered himself obnoxious to the laws, by same expressions which were deemed seditious; and Mr. Fuller was the more anxious to guard those of his own connection against the danger of revolutionary principles, which had originated, as he supposed, in the infidelity of the French democrats, whose principal object was, the total extinction of the Christian profession. "We have not known," says he, "a hundredth part of the dark deeds that have been perpetrated under the name of liberty. It is infidelity in disguise. Oh, that God may deliver us from it!"

On the appearance of his printed sermon, a pamphlet was published against it, complaining that a war upon the liberties of France was in itself unjust, and had provoked the threatened aggression. Mr. Fuller, without pronouncing any thing on this point, maintained the lawfulness of repelling an invasion, *whatever* might be the original grounds of dispute between the two governments. He afterwards wrote a short piece in a monthly journal, on "The influence of the conduct of religious people on the well-being of a country;" and some "Reflections on the Epistle of Jude," in reference to the same subject.

Mr. Fuller had no time to study astronomy, or any other branch of natural philosophy; but he had sufficient sagacity to detect and expose the fallacious reasoning of some pretended philosophers, who seek to undermine the evidences of revelation by deductions from the principles of science. Of this he gave abundant proof in his masterly work on Deism, particularly in reply to Paine's objection, arising from the magnitude of creation. And one day in conversation, a similar instance occurred, not unworthy of being recorded. A person had been remarking on the immeasurable distance of the fixed stars, and that according to the known properties of light, and the time required for its

reaching our earth, they must have existed previously to the Mosaic account of the creation, or the stars themselves would not now be visible. "Why," says Mr. Fuller, in the same way I could prove from the time it takes to learn a language that Adam and Eve must have been so long in the garden of Eden, before they could speak to one another. The truth is, that in creation every thing was produced *in a state of maturity*, and ready for action. It was *afterwards* that they were left to move on according to the laws of nature."

Early in 1804 his activities were called forth in favour of religious liberty, among the slave population in the West Indies. The Moravians and the Wesleyans had missionary stations in several of the islands for a number of years, and much good had been effected, without in the least endangering the peace and safety of the colonies. Mr. Reid, a pious Scotch missionary, and Mr. Sweigle, an excellent Baptist minister, had also laboured in the island of Jamaica with great success. But by a new act of the Jamaica Assembly, no public worship was to be tolerated, no social or domestic religion allowed among the slave population. "We have now," says Mr. Fuller, "five or six thousand poor Baptist negroes in the island of Jamaica, who are not suffered to speak to their ministers, nor their ministers to them. We have therefore determined on addressing his Majesty's Privy Council, who are now in consultation on the business."

He accordingly drew up a memorial, which was signed and presented by some of the London ministers, and favourably received. The persecutions which have since followed are too well known to need recital; and that they have originated in an utter aversion to Christianity itself, under the calumnious pretext of its tending to promote insubordination, cannot for one moment be doubted.

Still ardently pursuing his missionary career, of which a sketch will be given in chapter IV. Mr. Fuller paid a visit to Ireland in the summer of 1804; and during the following months, he was occasionally occupied in preparing for the press his two volumes of Expository Discourses on the book of Genesis, the first edition of which consisted of no less than two thousand copies.

Attentive to the claims of friendship, and to the voice of affliction, he would always find a little time to bind up the broken-hearted, and give suitable advice in seasons of distress. An intimate friend having lost his companion, one

whom Mr. Fuller much respected, he wrote the following affectionate letter; which, whilst it was adapted to comfort others with the same consolation wherewith he himself had been comforted of God, evinces a happy degree of weanedness from the world, and a growing meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light.

"*September* 19, 1805.

"My very dear Brother,

"I have just now received a line informing me that Mrs. M. is now more! I feel much for you and your family. There are few events of this kind that occur to my brethren, but they call to my remembrance the words of Aaron: 'Such things have befallen me.' The most intimate of earthly unions are dissoluble, and formed to be dissolved. We know these things at other times, and repeat them for the reconciling of others: but God will cause us all, sooner or later, to feel them. How often have you and I accompanied the mourners to the grave, as a matter of course, and conciliated their minds with the consolations of the gospel. And in our turn we are glad of the same consolations ourselves. Things which otherwise would be deemed mere common place, shall thus become meat and drink to us.

"Oh, my brother! though it may have been said a thousand times over, it will bear being said ten thousand times over again, 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.' What a blessed thing it is to give up our dearest relatives to Christ, instead of burying them without hope. When I have seen a pious young man marry an irreligious woman, it has occurred to me, How will you be able to bury her? You may lay your bones, or have them laid some day by her side, or even mingle dust with her; but you will be parted at the resurrection. But when I see two who have been fellow-heirs of the grace of life, walking together in the fear of the Lord, though one must expect to be taken first, yet how cheering the hope of meeting again to part no more!

"We have several friends near the mouth of the grave, and it will soon be our turn to follow. And soon let it be, if we may but be found ready. I seem of late to have the end of my life more constantly in view than formerly. The words of Paul have been sweet to me: 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'

"When I lost my late dear Mrs. F. I found it good to keep near to God, and to employ my mind constantly in my work. In this way I enjoyed a calmness and peace of mind which issued in comfort. We cannot come to see you; but we will pray for you, and sympathize with you. The Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and your affectionate brother, A. F."

The private remarks which Mr. Fuller made about this time, on the manner in which, according to his apprehensions, a monthly journal ought to be conducted, may not be undeserving the attention of some of our periodical editors; and his well-known aversion from all affectation and parade, will perhaps be deemed a sufficient excuse for the simplicity and plainness of his observations. "Pieces ought to be written, (he says,) with energy, by men of talent; and not by such kind of authors, who, if their names appeared to a publication, would not be able to sell enow to pay the printer. It is not sufficient to dress up a page somewhat cleverly, which when dressed is only like the light of the moon, which plays and amuses, but never burns. Such writing leaves no impression, the heart never glows, nor is the mind instructed after reading it. To affect to be prodigiously learned and polite, is not the way to be thought so by men of erudition; and among the generality of readers it is of no account.

"With regard to principle, (he farther observes,) a work will seldom prosper by attempting to combine the opposite systems of Calvinism and Arminianism. It is not by trying to please two parties, that such an undertaking will succeed; but by being decidedly of one, and treating all others with candour and fairness. There is indeed a periodical work that might seem to be an exception to this rule, by combining Calvinism and Arminianism together; yet it does not succeed on *that* account, but *notwithstanding* it. It is partly the ability which it displays, and partly its being *decidedly* episcopal, that makes it read among the church people; and others buy it to see how they are going on.

"Let us have a Review then, whose prominent features shall be divinity, and that decidedly Calvinistic, while it treats all other publications with frankness and good will; and it would be read by religious people. Let us have no such silly critiques as have been made on the words of the apostle, 'be ye angry, and sin not,' as if they were an interrogation instead of a precept, and anger in

itself sinful; a work pervaded with such puerile remarks, under the pretence of learning, would soon become contemptible. Let others excel us in the arts and sciences; *religion* ought to be our forte; and if a Review were ably conducted on this principle, it would be read on that account."

It was hardly to be expected, after a residence of twenty four years, and so much well-earned popularity, that Mr. Fuller would meet with interruption in the exercise of his ministry, especially in such an enlightened neighbourhood. Yet in January, 1806, a number of disorderly persons crowded into his place of worship, while he was delivering a funeral sermon for a respectable member of his church, and greatly alarmed the worshippers by their riotous behaviour, and crying out that the galleries were giving way. Mr. Fuller found it necessary to summons them before the magistrates; but not wishing to have the penalties inflicted, he devised another mode of punishment. The offenders were all made to stand up in the midst of the congregation on the following Sabbath, and ask pardon for their behaviour, while he read their confession to the people. At the same time, a paper, with their signatures, expressing their contrition, was read in the other places of dissenting worship in the town.

In the autumn he was very unwell, and not able to preach often, but found some relief in taking short excursions on horseback. He complained that his correspondence was a heavy load, and the application required in the day time prevented his resting at night. He had often written himself ill in answering letters, and dreaded the very sight of a postman.

In the summer of 1807 a very delicate piece of business fell into Mr. Fuller's hands, and which few men could have managed with so much success. A missionary in India, since deceased, had taken with him a pious young woman for his wife. Some time after their arrival at Serampore, the missionary was stationed at a great distance, about four hundred miles up the country. For want of necessary medical aid, which the neighbourhood did not afford, he lost his amiable consort. He afterwards married the widow of one of the missionaries who died at Serampore, and sustained a second bereavement under similar circumstances. Rendered disconsolate by his misfortunes, and still anxious of retaining a situation where his missionary efforts had been suc-

cessful, he addressed a letter to an intimate friend in England, imploring him, if possible, to send some pious female to his assistance. He was surrounded with Bengal natives, not a single religious European was known to him in all that part of the country, his labours were extremely arduous, his habitation was left to him comfortless and desolate, and he had no hope of relief but from England.

Mr. Fuller was on a journey to London soon after this letter arrived, and the minister who had received it put it into his hands. After reading it he said, "Well, he is a valuable missionary, and in such a trying situation fully entitled to our sympathy. There are many pious females in your congregation, and surely some one of them might be willing to share his labours and his friendship. The minister stated the insuperable difficulty attending such an application, the person of the missionary being unknown; and that as Mr. F. was going to London, inquiry might there be made with a better prospect of success. He might, perhaps, be as fortunate as Abraham's servant, who sought a wife for Isaac. "Well, then," said Mr. F. "I will try what I can do; and if I do not succeed I will leave the whole to your management."

On his arrival in town, he mentioned the subject to a minister, who quickly intimated that he could furnish he believed the very article that was wanted. "There is," says he, "at this time in our church, a godly young woman who has long wished to go to India to serve the mission in any capacity; and she can be well recommended for character and ability." An interview was accordingly appointed, and Mr. Fuller introduced the subject somewhat in the following manner:

"Well, Mary, and so you would have no objection to go to India?" "No, Sir: if I could be of any service to the family at Serampore I should wish to go, were it only to wash the disciples' feet." "Do you happen to know Mr. C.?" With some hesitation, "Yes, I know him." "And have you heard of his bereavement?" "I heard of it lately, but wished to go to Serampore, long before I knew of that event." "Well, we do not say that you should join Mr. C.'s society; we hope you will be advised in every thing by the family at Serampore, after your arrival; and if Mr. C. should offer you his friendship, you will be at all liberty to act for yourself. But should you be inclined in that case to accede to his wishes, and to join hand

and heart in his missionary labours, it will give us great pleasure and satisfaction."

The sequel of this singular adventure developes some of the mysteries of Providence, affecting the tenderest interests of human life; for it appeared afterwards, that this pious young woman was the *first* object of attachment to the devoted missionary; but that she had declined his acquaintance in consequence of his determination to labour in the work of the Lord among the heathen. Mr. Fuller, however, in a letter to a friend, tells the tale with an air of pleasantry, which it is hoped will not be displeasing to the reader.

"It appears," says he, "that Mr. C. had proposed marriage to the young woman, before his acquaintance with his first wife; that she at that time did not accept his offer, or rather as it should seem, said 'No,' as women often do, to save their modesty, and to try whether he was in good earnest; that he, like some other men, expecting to be sure that she would have made a low courtesy, and said, 'Yes, and thank you Sir,' took her 'No' as final, and so they parted. Now, however, the young woman's heart is strongly inclined to missionary service, and would go to India, free from all engagements respecting the missionary. I told her all that I knew of him, and of his failings; but she is still willing to go, if the Committee should approve."

In the course of a few weeks, August, 1807, the female adventurer embarked with a few pious friends for Philadelphia, where she was detained a considerable time, in consequence of a national rupture with America; but arrived eventually at Serampore, and was soon afterwards married to the missionary, who had been the first and only object of her attachment. It is scarcely necessary to add, that since the missionary cause has been better understood, and diffused a more lively interest, the zeal of pious females has not been wanting; but in the commencement of the undertaking, the amiable Mr. Ward and some others had to forego every prospect of this kind, and to forsake all for Christ's sake and the gospel's. Dr. Carey himself, in the first instance, embarked with only two of his sons; but having at length prevailed with his wife and family, they accompanied him to India.

In March, 1808, Mr. Fuller met with a serious accident. Travelling homewards from Bedfordshire, his horse suddenly took fright, while on a full trot, and threw him over

his head. He fell unfortunately on a large stone in the road, which produced a violent contusion on the left side, and for some time he was unable to rise, but no bones were broken. The effects of the accident were painfully felt for some months, but at length he returned to his usual course of labour. The interval was occupied in preparing for the press his able Apology for the Mission, and in the autumn he paid another visit to Scotland, to replenish its resources. His great exertions evidently impaired his health, and he began to complain of being distressed with the multiplicity of his private and public labours.

During the few remaining years allotted to this indefatigable man, the same unwearied course was pursued to the end of life. In 1809 he was greatly encouraged by a revival in his congregation; many were awakened under his ministry, and added to the church. In 1811 he took frequent colds from journeying, which brought on inflammation of the lungs, attended with bilious fever, and he was obliged for some time to desist from preaching. Having recovered a little strength in the autumn, he took his usual excursion into the north of England, where he travelled six hundred miles with great rapidity, collected upwards of six hundred pounds for the mission, and preached nearly every evening in the week. In November he caught a violent cold on his journey to London, and was again laid aside from preaching.

Though unequal to the fatigue of such a journey, he ventured to go into Wales in 1812, but was able to preach but little, and began to be fully aware that his time was short. In a letter to a friend he says:

"I seem to be near the end of my course, and hope through grace, and grace only, to finish it with joy. I have no transports, but a steady hope of eternal life, on the ground of my Saviour's death. I feel some freedom in my applications for mercy in his name. If I should die, I shall be able to say to the rising generation, 'God will surely visit you.' A work is begun that will not end until the world be subdued to the Saviour. We have done a little good, accompanied with much evil. The Lord grant that it may not be laid to our charge in that day!"

CHAPTER III.

His Ministerial Talents—Style of Preaching—Pastoral Labours—And general Usefulness.

This excellent and valuable man entered on the ministry in early life, as we have seen, with few advantages; his mind had received but little culture, and his unpolished appearance made no great impression in his favour. He had to encounter every difficulty by an effort of his own, and to trust more to his strong native sense, than to any auxiliary aid. His mental and moral improvement was rapid and extensive; and without waiting for the ordinary process, by which men attain to high degrees of eminence, he marched forward, and reached the goal in haste.

As a preacher he soon became popular, without any of the ordinary means of popularity. He had none of that easy elocution, none of that graceful fluency, which melts upon the ear, and captivates the attention of an auditor. His enunciation was laborious and slow; his voice strong and heavy; occasionally plaintive, and capable of an agreeable modulation. He had none of that eloquence which consists in a felicitous selection of terms, or in the harmonious construction of periods: he had a boldness in his manner, a masculine delivery, and great force of expression. His style was often deformed by colloquialisms and coarse provincials; but in the roughest of his compositions, "the bones of a giant might be seen."

In entering the pulpit he studied very little decorum, and often hastened out of it with an appearance of precipitation; but while there he seldom failed to acquit himself with honour and success. His attitude, too, was sufficiently negligent. Not aware of its awkwardness, in the course of his delivery he would insensibly place one hand upon his breast, or behind him, and gradually twist off a button from his coat, which some of his domestics had frequent occasion to replace. This habit was in process of time much corrected, and many other protuberances were smoothed away by the improvement of his taste, and the collisions of society; but certainly in these respects he was not the exact model of an orator.

His presence in the pulpit was imposing, grave, and manly; tending to inspire awe, rather than conciliate esteem. His general aspect was lowering and cloudy, giving

indications of a storm, rather than affording hopes of serenity. Yet there was nothing boisterous, loud, or declamatory; no intemperate warmth, or sallies of the passions; all was calm, pathetic, and argumentative, overcast with a kind of negligent grandeur. He was deeply impressed with his subject, and anxious to produce a similar impression on his hearers.

To an acute and vigorous understanding were united a rich and fertile imagination, an even flow of feeling, seldom rising to an ecstasy, and an awful sense of eternal realities; these, accompanied with an energetic manner of speaking, supplied every other defect, and gave to his ministry an unusual degree of interest. He could never be heard but with satisfaction: if the heart were not at all times affected, yet the judgment would be informed, and the taste gratified, by an unexpected display of some important truth, ingeniously stated, and powerfully applied. His own ideas were strong and lucid, and he had the faculty of placing them in the clearest light: if he failed to produce conviction, he was rarely deficient in evidence.

Though his writings enter deeply into controversy, in his ministry it was far otherwise. *There* he took the high places of the field; *here* he tarried at home and divided the spoil. The least disputable points of religion, which are at all times the most essential, were the leading theme of his ministry. The cross of Christ was the doctrine that lay nearest his heart; this, in all its tendencies and bearings, in all its relations to the government of God and the salvation of the soul, he delighted to elucidate in every diversity of form, and on this he dwelt with growing zeal and ardour to the close of life. It was a subject that met him in every direction, that beautified and adorned every other topic, that lived and breathed in all his preaching, and laid the foundation of all his hopes.

As there are many who must have observed the concentrated effect of Mr. Fuller's sermons, it may not be amiss briefly to notice the principle on which they were avowedly constructed; if it do not excite to general emulation, it may afford to some, at least, a hint of instruction. One of the first books that Mr. Fuller read, after entering on the ministry, and which he frequently recommended to others, was Claude's Essay on the composition of a Sermon; and to that work he acknowledged himself indebted, for any just ideas which he entertained upon the subject. 'Uni-

ty of design,' was apparent in all his discourses; there were no vagrant sentiments, nothing foreign or irrelevant; and though his preaching exhibited a rich variety of remark, all was made to bear upon one point, and to facilitate the end he had in view. His sermons were never destitute of what Aristotle requires in every discourse—a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Every intelligent hearer must also have noticed, with what admirable dexterity the preacher would avail himself of the attributes of his text,—time, place, persons, and other adventitious circumstances; with what care he would investigate its terms, ascertain its meaning, explore its recesses, mark its gradations, trace its connections, and poize its different parts; and how, when he had provided the repast, he would make a distribution like the master of a feast. The simplicity of his ideas, their correspondence with truth and nature, and the luminous order in which they were arranged, produce the effect of enchantment; every one beheld the beauties contained in Scripture, and were surprised that he did not discover them before.

The composition of a sermon seldom cost Mr. Fuller much trouble; owing to his constant habits of thinking, it was generally the easiest part of all his labours. And though it would be highly improper to propose such an example for imitation, especially to young ministers, and those less competent to the undertaking, yet an hour or two at the close of the week would commonly be sufficient for his purpose; and when much pressed for time, as he often was, his preparations would be made on the Sabbath, during the intervals of preaching; yet it required more than common strength of mind to digest such discourses as he was in the habit of delivering. It should also be observed, that Mr. Fuller's sketches for the pulpit consisted only of a few brief outlines, committed to memory, and enlarged at the time of preaching. He never filled up any written discourse, except when it was intended for the press, and after it had been delivered.

Those who heard him only occasionally, or but seldom, did not hear him to the best advantage; for though he would often excel on great occasions, he was generally most happy at home with his own people. Having but little relish for a stale subject, it was seldom pleasant to him to deliver the same discourse twice over; he would rather come directly from his closet, and bring out of his treasury

things new as well as old. His mind retained a verdant freshness, capable of new productions; and his daily converse with the Scriptures rendered it an agreeable task, to combine the varieties of thought which they suggested. Several of his discourses on particular occasions were printed at the request of those who heard them; and had he listened to the solicitations of his friends, their number would have been greatly multiplied.

Expounding the Scriptures was an employment in which Mr. Fuller delighted, and in which he eminently excelled. He did not, however, undertake any thing like a critical exposition, nor did he profess himself a critic on any subject. Indeed, he had no great liking to the generality of critical commentators; and he sometimes expressed an opinion, that the practice of attempting to illustrate the Scriptures on the principles of philosophy, or by frequent allusions to natural history and eastern customs, in which coincidencies were imagined that never existed, tended to darken counsel by words without knowledge, and to betray, rather than support, the true interests of revelation.

The application of sound criticism, to obviate the difficulty and elucidate the meaning of some obscure passages, he approved as much as any one; but he had no idea that a right understanding of the scriptures in general was to be attained in that way, any more than that the principal facts in English history were to be decided by the help of a dictionary. It was not words so much as things to which he attended; and for a just conception of these he trusted more to common sense, well applied to the subject, and guided by moral feeling in a highly cultivated state, than to mere literary acquirements.

He greatly deprecated the learned trifling of some good men, who are said to have taken up more time in their addresses to a country congregation, in ascertaining the form and dimensions of an oriental tea-kettle, than in showing to men the way of salvation.* His contempt of such kind of learning might in some instances carry him too far; but no man had a quicker discernment of its misapplication, or could judge more worthily of the proper objects of the Christian ministry. Instead of employing his time, or engaging the attention of his hearers, on the superficies of

* An anecdote to this effect was told him by the late Mr. Hickman of Wattesfield, in reference to his ingenious and learned predecessor, the celebrated writer on Oriental Customs.

a text, or its imaginary references, he was all intent on searching out its riches, sounding its depth, comparing it with the analogy of faith, pointing out its application, and deducing consequences, seldom obvious to the hearer, but meeting his judgment in all their force, and carrying conviction to the heart.

In this way he went over a great part of the scriptures, in a course of morning lectures for a number of years, taking first one book, and then another, without any regard to chronological order; and had his life been continued, he would, in all probability, have completed his exposition of the sacred volume. These lectures, as they were delivered from the pulpit, exhibited great variety and extent of observation; but as they were not composed with a view to publication, and were often delivered without any preparatory notes whatever, the greater proportion of them are lost beyond recovery; and little remains besides a few general outlines, which cannot be filled up to advantage by any other hand. All that is saved of this valuable store, consists of the Expository Discourses on the Book of Genesis, published in 1805; and which, though little more than a miniature of the living lectures, are likely to perpetuate the usefulness of their invaluable Author. The rest are buried in oblivion, except his Expository Lectures on the Book of Revelation, announced for publication after his decease, and which have since made their appearance in print.

In discharging the duties of the pastoral office, Mr. Fuller was not equally successful, nor in this did he excel. There was no want of diligence or fidelity; but his numerous, and, perhaps, still more important engagements, did not afford him sufficient opportunity; nor was his turn of mind adapted to that easy and gracious kind of intercourse which these duties would require. He was not backward in spiritual and edifying conversation; not unmindful of the poor, the sick, or the afflicted; nor inattentive to the welfare of individuals; but his element was in deep waters, and he seemed to demand a wider range for his faculties than the limits of an individual society. Those who wished for more of his pastoral advice, were fearful of breaking in upon his retirements, or of interrupting the career of his labours; while he himself often felt and lamented the necessity which required the suspension of several of the humbler duties of the christian minister. It might truly be said of him in measure, as of Paul: The Lord sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.

He was severely circumspect, however, in the execution of church discipline; a subject he had studied from the Scriptures, and on which he published his thoughts in a widely-circulated pamphlet. His manner of administering the ordinances of the gospel was peculiarly solemn and impressive. At the Lord's table he generally spoke but little, but that little was appropriate and affecting. He strongly objected to the practice of engaging the whole of the time in addressing the communicants, instead of devoting some part of it to silent and solemn meditation.

Tenacious as he had always been of the independent rights of a Christian society, and the popular election of its officers, he observed much evil to arise out of the exercise of those rights, which he wished if possible to correct. Deacons, in particular, are often appointed to office by the people, not for their superior wisdom or spirituality, but on account of their rank in society, or the influence and property which they possess; and by this means the hands of the minister are weakened, and the interests of religion suffer. Mr. Fuller therefore preferred that the nomination of new deacons should proceed from the pastor and other deacons already in office, having previously obtained a vote for that purpose; and that out of several thus recommended, the church should make its own election. The following is the outline of an Address which Mr. Fuller once delivered to his own church, in order to direct their choice of suitable persons to the office.

"Much of the purity of the church," he observes, "depends on the conduct of its deacons, seeing it is impossible for a pastor to maintain proper discipline without their concurrence; much of the pastor's comfort also was involved, as it would be necessary for him to act in concert with his brethren in office, and therefore they should be careful to choose such men as are mentioned in Ezra x. 4; and as the comfort of the poor was also concerned, such characters should be appointed as would be ready to discover and relieve their wants."

After these preliminary remarks, he proceeds to consider the qualifications for the office of deacons. "These," says he, "you will find in Acts vi. 3, and 1 Tim. iii. 8. They must be men of 'honest report,' in their general character; men of integrity aud honour—'Full of the Holy Ghost,' spiritually-minded men—'And of wisdom;' men of solidity and discretion, who are well skilled in counsel, and have a turn of mind for composing of differences.

"Such is the account given in the first of these passages. One cannot but observe here, that no mention is made of opulence, as a qualification. A man certainly is not the worse for this, but neither is he the better; nor is he on that account to be esteemed more eligible than another. This is a very common practice, but it is highly injurious.

"But what says Paul? He enumerates the qualifications of a deacon, in 1 Tim. iii. 8. Here are gravity, sincerity, sobriety, generosity, soundness in the faith, purity of manners, a good conscience, men of some standing, whose fidelity had been proved.

"Alas! I hear you say, where are such characters to be found? True; and I am afraid this is a melancholy proof, how short we come of the primitive churches. But still we must choose those who, in our judgment, approach the nearest to this model. Perhaps even they had not men in whom *all* these qualifications were united; some excel in one thing, and some in another; and as I would not wish the church to be discouraged, nor those who may be chosen to office; let every one be willing to be what his brethren wish him to be. We should neither aspire to be what we are not called to, nor refuse to occupy that post to which we are called. Only let us be of the spirit of the good woman, of whom our Lord said, 'She hath done what she could.'"

This Address affords one instance amongst many others, of the inflexible integrity of Mr. Fuller's mind; of his desire to do nothing by partiality; and that in what related to the glory of God, he knew no man after the flesh. If he erred in any thing, it was in his honest zeal to do what seemed to him to be right: no one can doubt his incorruptness, though his infallibility may be fairly questioned.

Considering the piety and the talents of such a man, his ministry might be expected to produce important effects; and certainly, such effects were really produced. The number of persons apparently converted in Mr. Fuller's own congregation, and by his occasional labours in other places, was not, however, greater than in ordinary cases, and bore only a common proportion to the multiplicity and extent of his engagements. During the two and thirty years he preached at Kettering, the members of his church seldom exceeded a hundred and fifty; and though the place of worship was once enlarged, and afterwards rebuilt in 1805, the number of stated hearers scarcely amounted to a thousand. This may be said, indeed, to have borne

a tolerable proportion to the population of the town and neighbourhood, where other respectable congregations also existed; nor is this statement intended to detract from Mr. Fuller's usefulness, but merely to convey that kind of information which persons living at a distance from the seat of his labours would naturally expect, in a work which professes to give the history of so extraordinary a man.

Nor can it be denied that many of his brethren, of very inferior talents, have been equally if not more successful, in turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God And though at times it seemed impossible to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake, the human heart was often impenetrable to his attacks, and his weapons fell pointless to the ground. If strong mental powers, exerted in all their force; if unusual fidelity and zeal, accompanied with consummate skill, in directing appeals to the understanding, and pungent addresses to the conscience, could have insured a large portion of success, it might have been expected in the present instance; but in reviewing the lives and labours of the most distinguished characters, we are constantly reminded of that humbling truth: 'Paul may plant and Apollos water, but it is God that giveth the increase." "It is not by might, nor by power," that the temple shall be built; "but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

There is, however, no need to resolve these things into religious phenomena, while there is any rational way left of accounting for them. If Mr. Fuller possessed superior ability, his preaching did not display greater warmth of affection or of holy zeal, than that of many of his brethren; nor was it attended with that remarkable unction, which precedes and accompanies eminent success.

Among the faithful departed, few were more successful in converting sinners unto God, than the excellent Mr. Pearce of Birmingham; and considering the shortness of his ministerial career, his usefulness in this respect was rather extraordinary. In what consistent way is this to be accounted for? "The governing principle in Mr. Pearce, beyond all doubt," says his biographer, "was *holy love.* To mention this is sufficient to prove it to all who knew him. His friends have often compared him to that disciple whom Jesus loved. His religion was that of the heart. Almost every thing he saw, or heard, or read, or studied, was converted to the feeding of this divine flame. Every

subject that passed through his hands, seemed to have been cast into this mould. His sermons were generally the effusions of his heart, and invariably aimed at the hearts of his hearers." It is no wonder, therefore, if under the influence of such holy fervour, when the preacher "could scarcely speak for weeping, nor the people hear for interrupting sighs and sobs," great moral effects should be produced. The gospel can only be imparted by that Spirit which is of God; no zeal, no talents, can supply its place; and the enmity of the human heart can only be overcome by the omnipotence of love.

There were seasons in which Mr. Fuller deeply participated in these feelings, though the general cast of his ministry was more masculine and less fervid, less tender, than that of his amiable friend. The judgment was often in exercise, when the affections were not; and in the minister, the man was sometimes more visible than the Christian. This no doubt is a defect to which men of strong powers are more particularly liable. Towards the latter part of life, however, when afflictions and trials had imparted greater sensibilities, and given a mellowness to his general habit, he would serve the Lord with many tears, and put on bowels of mercies, kindness, and long-suffering, while beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God. It is of the utmost importance, however, that more of this spirit be imbibed, in order to any real or extensive usefulness. Those who can impart not the gospel of God only, but their own souls also, because the salvation of men is dear to them, will generally find that their labour is not in vain in the Lord.

"It may be laid down as a rule," said Mr. Fuller on one occasion,* "that eminent spirituality in a minister is usually attended with eminent usefulness. It is true, our usefulness does not depend on our spirituality, as an effect depends upon its cause, nor is it always in proportion to it. God is a sovereign, and frequently sees it proper to convince us of it, in variously bestowing his blessing on the means of grace: yet he is not wanting in giving encouragement to what he approves, wherever it is found. Our want of usefulness is often to be ascribed to our want of spirituality, much oftener than to our want of natural ability. God has frequently been known to succeed men of but rough parts and abilities, where they have been emi-

* His Ordination Sermon, delivered at Thorne, in Bedfordshire.

nently holy; while he has blasted others of much superior talents, where that was wanting."

On another occasion Mr. Fuller also remarks, "that in proportion as we lean upon our gifts, or preparations, we slight the Holy Spirit; and no wonder that, being grieved, he should leave us to do our work alone. Besides, when this is the case, it is, humanly speaking, unsafe for God to prosper us, especially those ministers who possess superior abilities."

Mr. Fuller's ministry was, however, attended with considerable usefulness, though not altogether in the way that has been mentioned. There were others who could lay the foundation, and teach what are the first principles of the oracles of God; it was his to rear the superstructure, and to build up the saints on their most holy faith; and in this he performed the work of a wise master-builder. His preaching was distinguished for depth of thought, a fulness of scriptural truth, and great perspicuity and force in stating and defending it. It was like a blazing torch in the midst of the churches; and by the incessant intercourse which he maintained, its light was diffused in every direction. Its effects were also powerfully felt in keeping alive those principles on which the interests of vital and practical religion depend; in strengthening the weak hands and confirming the feeble knees, and in exciting and encouraging the exertions of all his brethren. He had a bishopric, without any of its titles or emoluments; and the care of all the churches, within the immediate sphere of his acquaintance, came upon him daily. In their formation, in the ordination of their pastors, and in every case of difficulty, his assistance was required, and in these important services he excelled. The interest he felt in the peace and prosperity of the societies around him, was deep and lasting; and when any of them were left destitute, or in low circumstances, he would ardently exclaim, "Oh, Lord, what wilt thou do for thy great name!"

Abundant as were his labours in disseminating the gospel among the villages in his immediate vicinity, and among the churches of his own connection, their effect was not to be estimated by his personal exertions. His influence was seen operating on the general mass of that religious community to which he belonged, purging out the old leaven, infusing principles of truth, and fermenting it with holy zeal and ardour. It was seen operating in various parts

of England, amongst different denominations; in Scotland, in Ireland, across the Atlantic, beyond the boundaries of the Indian Ocean, and the mountains of Tibet. The wilderness and the solitary place were made glad for him, and the desert began to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

CHAPTER. IV.

Origin of the Baptist Mission—Early Notices of Dr. Carey—His Designation to India—Mr. Fuller's Missionary Labours—His first Visit to Scotland—Congratulations of the Missionaries—His Answer to some Objections—Second Tour into Scotland—Visit to Ireland—State of the Irish Baptists—Catholic Emancipation—Missionary Labours continued.

To Mr. Fuller was reserved the distinguished honour of becoming one of the first in his own denomination, who opened the door of faith to the modern idolatrous Gentiles, and prepared the way for a mission to the east. Here a scene presented itself, of sufficient extent to afford the most ample scope for his abilities, and setting before him an object commensurate with the boundless desires of his heart. This was the commencement of a new era in the life of this great man. Henceforth his labours took a new direction; his preaching, his prayers, and his correspondence, all had reference to this great subject; and his character began to unfold itself in a still more interesting and magnificent form.

The Baptist Mission in India has been described by persons who had no immediate concern whatever in the undertaking, to have been "as disinterested in design, and as strenuous in exertion, as any that the Christian world ever did or ever can employ for the illumination and conversion of idolaters; and surpassing, beyond comparison, all former missions, and all other undertakings, in the grand article of translating the Bible into the languages of the heathen."

The justice and propriety of this encomium may be appreciated by the results which are already before the public. Twenty missionary stations were formed in various parts of India, in the course of as many years; some of

them more than three thousand miles apart; upwards of forty missionaries, Europeans and natives, are constantly employed; more than five hundred persons, of different nations, have been baptized, and formed into distinct churches; the Scriptures are translated and printed in more than thirty of the oriental languages, and are circulating, in connection with the itinerant labours of the missionaries amongst an immense population, and over an extent of country, equal to that of the whole of Europe.*

Such are the present fruits of this mission: its future consequences who can calculate! But its humble origin, in which the hand of God is so visibly displayed, deserves to be distinctly traced; nor can the unostentatious character of its principal agent be duly appreciated without marking the results of this stupendous undertaking.

The Baptist Missionary Society is stated to have been formed at Kettering, in 1792; and its formation to have been occasioned by the suggestions and frequent solicitations of the present Dr. Carey; to whose indefatigable zeal and unparalleled exertions, the mission and the church of God, will doubtless be under perpetual obligations. There was, however, a principle operating which led to this result, though its effects were not immediately observed; and the fire which Carey kindled, was in effect taken from a coal which had been burning upon another altar.

On a subject of such general importance, even its minutest circumstances become interesting; and viewed in connection with an efficient cause, they tend to show by what gradual and humble means it pleases God frequently to accomplish his great designs. "The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation;" its coming is generally unobserved, and the lowly form which it assumes, gives but little notice of its approach. Its first appearance is as imperceptible as a "grain of mustard seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree; so that the fowls of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

Several years previous to the existence of the Baptist Mission, and before any ideas were entertained of such an undertaking, the low state of religion in general, and of the Baptist churches in particular, had become a subject

* Brief View of the Baptist Missions and Translations, drawn up gratuitously in 1815, by a member of another denomination.

of deep lamentation among many of the ministers. At an Association held at Nottingham, in 1784, it was resolved to set apart an hour on the first Monday evening in every month, for extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion, and for extending the kingdom of Christ in the world. Mr. Fuller at the same time delivered a sermon on "The Nature and Importance of walking by Faith," which he afterwards published; and to this were added, "A few Persuasives to a General Union in Prayer, for the Revival of Religion." This Address, though unaccompanied with any design beyond what it immediately specifies, operated as a powerful stimulant, and produced effects which in reality contained the germ of the future mission.

The lapse of time, and a succession of other interesting occurrences, have in great measure defaced the recollection of the minuter parts of this history; for the sake, therefore, of many readers, it is necessary to recapitulate some of the leading topics urged on this occasion, and observe their tendency to excite to renewed exertions in the cause of God.

After considering Christ's readiness to hear prayer, especially in what relates to the enlargement of his kingdom, the writer of these Persuasives adverts to the existing declensions in religion, and urges the consideration of what the Lord had done in ages past, as an incitement to united and fervent prayer.

"When Israel was in Egypt, and things looked very dark indeed, they cried, and the Lord heard, and came down to deliver them. Their deliverance was the extending of Christ's kingdom; and God overthrew Pharaoh and all his host for setting themselves against it. The church, in after ages, when in her low estate at Babylon, is represented as making use of this as a plea with God. Thus they say to him: 'Awake, awake, put on thy strength, oh arm of the Lord—awake as in ancient days, in the generation of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep: and hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?' And was their prayer answered? Yes; the Lord presently replied, 'I am the Lord thy God that divided the sea, whose waves roared; the Lord of Hosts is his name.' Yea, as a kind of echo to their request, he adds, 'Awake, awake, stand up, oh Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury. Thus saith thy Lord Jehovah, and thy God that pleaded the cause of his people; behold I have taken out of thy hand the cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of my fury, and thou shalt no more drink it again.'

"While Judah groaned beneath Babel's yoke, Daniel set his face three times a day towards Jerusalem. At length his prayers and

supplications are heard, and an angel is sent to comfort him; yea, and to inform him that at the beginning of his supplications the commandment in favour of Judah came forth. And now, God's conduct towards Pharaoh and his host shall be acted over again, towards Belshazzar and his. Yes, he not only gave Egypt and Ethiopia, but Babylon also for their ransom.

"The church of God was reduced exceedingly low, just before the coming of Christ; but what was the conduct of those who were on God's side? Some of them are distinguished by the character of those who 'looked for' redemption in Jerusalem; and others are said to have continued in prayer night and day. At length, through the tender mercy of God, their prayers were answered, and the day-spring from on high visited them.

"Just before that great outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the church was in a low and disconsolate condition, having lost Christ's personal presence: however, they united with one accord in ardent prayer, in an upper room, to the number of about a hundred and twenty. Presently, and their light brake forth as the morning—a little one becomes a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. Thousands are converted by a single sermon, and satan falls before the gospel of Christ like lightning from heaven."

The writer then applies these apposite cases in the following impressive manner:

"May we not make the same use of these glorious works of God, with some others in that day, that Judah did in Babylon of what God had done for them in Egypt? May we not plead now with Christ,—'Awake, awake, put on strength, oh arm of the Lord: awake, as in the ancient days! Art thou not it that didst cut the foe, when hanging on the cross; that didst wound his interest on the day of Pentecost?' And may we not plead, that as God destroyed Babylon, and delivered his church; so he would destroy the power and principles of mystical Babylon? He preserved a people, namely the Waldenses, who in the worst of times bowed not the knee to the image of this idol; and when they were nearly exterminated by persecution, he raised up a host of men at the reformation, who gave it a deadly wound,—a wound from which it has never recovered to this day. Let us then pray to the Lord Jesus, that the work may be carried on; that antichrist may be consumed with the spirit of his mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming; that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and that he may reign for ever and ever!

Christianity has not yet made its way, even in name, over one fifth part of the world. Out of seven hundred and thirty millions who are supposed to inhabit our globe, not above one hundred and twenty two millions profess the Christian name. All the rest are Heathens, Jews, or Mahometans; and of those who do profess it, the far greater part are either of the apostate church of Rome, or of the Greek church, which is nearly as corrupt. Add to this, what great numbers of real heathens abound in Christian lands, and unbelievers even in the congregations of the faithful. Surely it is high time for us to awake out of sleep, and to send our united cries to Heaven in behalf of our fellow creatures!"

Having considered the melancholy state of the world, the general aspect of providence, and the promises of God concerning his church in times to come, as affording additional motives for prayer, the Address concludes with assurances that it would not be in vain, whatever might be the immediate or apparent issue.

"Could we but heartily unite to make a real earnest effort," said this laborious man, "there is reason to hope that great good might follow. Whenever those glorious outpourings of God's Spirit shall come over the whole world, no doubt it will be in answer to the prayers of his people. But suppose we should never live to see those days, still our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. To say the least of it, God would be glorified, and that would be no small matter. It would at least convey this piece of intelligence to the world,—That God had yet some hearty friends in it, who continue to pray to him in the darkest times. And if, as in the case of David's building the house, he is not pleased to grant our requests, yet he will take it well at our hands: and who can be said to have lost his labour, who obtains the approbation of his God?

"But this is not all: our petitions may prove like seed in the earth, that shall not perish, though it may not spring up in our days. The prophets laboured, and the apostles entered into their labours; and what if we should be the sowers, and our posterity the reapers; shall we think much at this? Perhaps as great an honour at the last day may attend Isaiah, who hardly knew who had believed his report, as Peter, by whose sermon thousands were converted in an hour. Neither is this all; there are different degrees of prosperity bestowed upon different parts of Zion, and these favours are often granted to those particular communities where ardent prayer, love, and holiness most prevail.—Add to this, the prosperity of our own souls is generally connected with an earnest pursuit of God's glory and Christ's kingdom. Consolation, like reputation, will not do to be sought directly for its own sake. In that case it will flee from us. But let us seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto us. One great reason perhaps why so many christians go destitute of divine comfort is, because they care so little about any thing else: God, therefore, justly withholds it from them. If they were more to seek his glory, and the extending of his kingdom in the world, they would find consolation come of its own accord. He that cannot lie when speaking of his church, hath said, *They shall prosper that love thee.*"

These sentiments, sufficiently important at all times, derive additional interest from the circumstances in which they were delivered, and the great results to which they ultimately tended. They had their influence on the churches and individuals to whom they were more immediately addressed. Monthly prayer-meetings became simultaneous, and were now attended to with renewed zeal and importunity, till the example was followed by other denominations, and continued to the present day.

In less than two years, another event followed, in close, though undiscerned, connection with the preceding, tending still farther to prepare the way for the eventual designs of Providence. Early in 1786, Mr. Fuller published his treatise, which he had written four or five years before, entitled, "The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation;" in which he undertook to explain the nature of saving faith, and to prove the obligations of men to believe in Christ, wherever he was made known. This performance made a considerable impression on the churches and ministers in immediate connection with the Author, and occasioned discussion in other parts of the same denomination. In some quarters it excited great opposition and alarm, and brought on a long and animated controversy. It was the means however of awakening the attention of several of his brethren to the important duties of their office, of giving a more practical turn to their preaching, and a new face to their religious interests; and in connection with the monthly prayer-meetings, it produced an impulse which would be favourable to missionary undertakings.

Mr. Carey was born into the religious world about the time that these things were going on, and soon became an interested spectator. He was baptized in 1783, was called to the ministry two or three years afterwards, and ordained pastor of the church at Moulton, near Northampton, in 1787. At his first setting out, he was much perplexed between the statements of the Arminians, on some theological points, and the crude representations of some Calvinists; but having adopted a satisfactory medium between the two extremes, his mind was fully prepared for the doctrine so successfully pleaded by Mr. Fuller.

From his entering on the work of the ministry, if not from an earlier period, Mr. Carey appears to have been deeply impressed with the state of the heathen world. In reference to this, he made himself acquainted with the geography, population, and religion of the various nations of the earth; and with the labours of christians, both of early and later ages, in propagating the gospel. He also acquired considerable knowledge of various languages, particularly Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, by his own efforts, without the aid of any instructer; and could read his Bible in six or seven versions before he embarked for India. He one day purchased for a few pence an old book, which happened to be Ditton on the Resurrection, printed in French; and not having learned that language, he, in the course of three

weeks, made himself so far master of it, that he could read Ditton with great satisfaction. The learning of a language to such a man as Carey, seemed to require but little effort; he would accomplish it by laying a book before him, while engaged in some laborious employment, as a mere matter of amusement.

His thoughts meanwhile were brooding over the subject of a mission, without assuming any specific form, or digesting any future plan of operation. The appearance of Mr. Fuller's work, just mentioned, came directly in aid of his inquiries, and fixed his attention more deeply on the subject. The point of contact may be thus described. Mr. Carey, who cordially admitted his friend's position, seemed to deduce from it an unavoidable inference:—'If it be the duty of all men where the gospel comes, to believe unto salvation; then it is the duty of those who are intrusted with the gospel, to endeavour to make it known among all nations for the obedience of faith.' Though this is not affirmed to have been the formal operation of thought, it would be difficult if not impossible to conceive, how the latter conclusion should stand on any other ground than that of a previous admission, that an obligation to believe is co-extensive with the proclamation of the gospel; and this was not avowed by any of Mr. Fuller's connections, until he had written his unanswerable treatise on the subject. He himself was indeed so fully aware of the paralyzing tendency of the opposite system, that in his early correspondence on missionary subjects he in effect admits, that no mission could have been called into existence on hyper-calvinistic principles. "I feel a sacred satisfaction," he says, "in the principles I have endeavoured to state and defend; they are such in the main, that I can venture upon them for eternity. Those which I have attempted to refute, still appear to me, and that with abundantly increasing evidence, to be the bane of the churches: they unnerve the Christian for spiritual activity." *

Before the end of 1786, Mr. Carey, accompanied by another minister of the same age and standing with himself, went to a ministers' meeting at Northampton. Towards the close of the evening, when the public services were ended, and the company engaged in a desultory conversation, Mr. Ryland senior entered the room; and with his accustomed freedom insisted that the two junior minis-

* Baptist Magazine, 1816, p. 455.

ters, Mr. Carey and his friend, (the writer of these Memoirs) should each propose a question for general discussion. His friend, with much reluctance, proposed for consideration the latter part of 2 Pet. ii. 1; and was very ludicrously told to go home and read Gill and Brine, and various other commentators, and not to come there with his Arminian questions. Mr. Carey next pleaded several excuses—but a question was imperiously demanded. At length he submitted, "Whether the command given to the apostles to 'teach all nations,' was not obligatory on all succeeding ministers, to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying the promise was of equal extent."

Without waiting for the judgment of the company, the same person said, he ought certainly to have known, that nothing could be done before another Pentecost, when an effusion of miraculous gifts, including the gift of tongues, would give effect to the commission of Christ as at first; and that he was a most miserable enthusiast for asking such a question. This was the first time Mr. Carey had mentioned the subject openly, and he was greatly abashed and mortified; but he still pondered these things in his heart. Mr. Fuller sympathized with him, as soon as Mr. Ryland senior had withdrawn, and offered several encouraging remarks, recommending him to pursue his inquiries.

Mr. Carey never lost sight of his object; it was always uppermost in his thoughts. Whenever he met with his brethren in the ministry, he never failed to converse with them on the importance and practicability of missions. These conversations, together with the monthly prayer-meetings, considerably impressed the minds of the ministers. It seemed scarcely reconcileable with sincerity, to pray month after month, and year after year, for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, and use no means for that purpose.

About the year 1790, Mr. Carey visited Birmingham, and became acquainted with the excellent Mr. Pearce, whose kindred soul entered with ardour into all his views. Some of the leading members of Mr. Pearce's church were also much interested in his proposals, and promised to assist him. One in particular, urged him to prepare his thoughts for publication, and made an offer of ten pounds towards the printing. On his return to Northampton, he met with Mr. Fuller, and two other brethren, to whom he communicated what had passed, and requested that one

of them would undertake the publication. This they declined, but recommended him to keep his object still in view.

In the spring of the year 1791, a meeting of ministers was held at Clipstone, which brought the matter to a crisis. Two sermons were preached on that occasion, and afterwards printed. The first was by Mr. Sutcliffe, from 1 Kings xix. 10, on "Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts." The other was delivered by Mr. Fuller, from Haggai i. 2, on "The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Matters of Religion." The latter of these sermons made such an impression on the minds of the ministers present, and the audience in general, as will not easily be forgotten. Every heart was penetrated with the subject; and the ministers retired, scarcely able to speak to one another. A scene of such deep solemnity has seldom been witnessed. Mr. Carey, perceiving the impression on all around him, could not suffer the company to separate until they had come to some resolution on the forming of a Missionary Society; and a society would then have been formed, but for the well known deliberative prudence of Mr. Sutcliffe. The resolution made at that time was, that as Mr. Carey was known to have a manuscript by him on the subject, he should be requested to publish it at an early opportunity. His pamphlet appeared soon afterwards, under the title of "An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to send the Gospel to the Heathen."

The annual association was held at Nottingham, in the spring of 1792, and Mr. Carey was appointed to preach. His sermon was founded on Isaiah liv. 2, 3. Having observed that the church of God is there addressed as a desolate widow, dwelling alone in a little cottage; that the command to enlarge her tent contained an intimation, that there should be an increase in her family; and that to account for so unexpected a change, she was told, that her "Maker was her husband," who should be "called the God of the whole earth," he took up what he conceived to be the spirit of the passage in two exhortations; namely, EXPECT GREAT THINGS—ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS. The effect of this discourse was considerable. A resolution was passed, "That against the next meeting of ministers at Kettering, a plan should be prepared for the purpose of forming a society for propagating the gospel among the heathen." Mr. Carey at the same time generously propos-

ed to devote the profits which might arise from his late publication, to the use of such a society.

The ministers accordingly assembled at Kettering, Oct. 2, 1792. After the public services were over, they retired for prayer, and pledged themselves most solemnly to God and to one another, that they would make an attempt to evangelize the heathen. Hitherto there were no openings for a mission in any particular direction, no missionaries provided, nor any funds to meet the expense. The sum of thirteen pounds only was subscribed, and soon after seventy pounds were collected by Mr. Pearce at Birmingham; but until a more specified object was proposed, no appeal could with any propriety be made to the public. At two subsequent meetings, in October and November, Mr. Carey offered himself as a missionary, and was accepted.

While things were thus proceeding, Providence was preparing the way to India, by the most unexpected means. Mr. John Thomas, who had formerly been a surgeon in London, and who was totally unknown to the Society, had been several years in Bengal, preaching the gospel occasionally to the natives. On his return to London, he endeavoured to establish a fund for a mission to that country, and called on the Rev. Abraham Booth for his advice, who immediately communicated the information to the newly formed Society, and recommended Mr. Thomas to their attention. The Society invited Mr. Thomas to their meeting, on Jan. 10, 1793, after having received a satisfactory answer to their inquiries; and late in the evening, while they were in full deliberation, his arrival was announced. Impatient to behold his colleague, he entered the room in haste; and Mr. Carey rising from his seat, they fell on each other's necks and wept. The committee, then assembled at Kettering, accepted their joint services, and engaged to do all in their power to provide the means of sending them to India.

"From Mr. Thomas's account we saw," says Mr. Fuller, "there was a gold mine in India, but it seemed almost as deep as the centre of the earth. Who will venture to explore it? 'I will venture to go down,' said Carey to his brethren; 'but remember that you must hold the ropes.' We solemnly engaged to do so, nor while we live shall we desert him."

The holy confidence which Mr. Fuller felt on this occasion, was expressed in his correspondence with distant min-

isters, whose co-operation he solicited on behalf of this great undertaking."

"Our hearts and hands," says he, "are full. We have not gone about this business in a hurry; we have been praying for it, by monthly prayer-meetings, for these eight or nine years; and now we wish to do something more than pray. Some have questioned whether the mission can be supported. For my part, I believe IN GOD, and have not much doubt but that a matter begun as this was, will meet his approbation; and that he who has inclined the hearts of our brethren hitherto so much beyond our expectations, will go on to incline their hearts, 'not to lose the things which they have wrought.' I confess I feel sanguine in my hopes; but they are fixed in God. Instead of failing in the enterprise, I hope to see not only that, but many others accomplished. I hope the Society will never slacken its efforts, while there are such vast numbers of heathens in almost every part of the world. It would do your heart good to see the love to Christ, and the souls of men, discovered in many parts of the country, in readily contributing to the mission. I feel an exquisite satisfaction that we have made the attempt; the isssue is in His hands whose cause it is."*

On the 20th of March, 1793, previous to the departure of the missionaries, a day of holy convocation was held at Leicester. The former part of it was wholly devoted to prayer. In the afternoon, Mr. Thomas preached from Psl. xvi. 4. "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god;" and a public collection was made for the mission. In the evening, Mr. Hogg of Thrapstone delivered a suitable discourse on the solemn occasion, from Acts xxi. 14. "And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done." Mr. Fuller addressed the missionaries from John xx. 21. "Peace be unto you; as my Father have sent me, even so send I you."

"Every part of the solemnities of this day," said he, "must be affecting; but if there be one part which is more so than the rest, it is that which is allotted to me, delivering to you a solemn parting address. But the hope of your undertaking being crowned with success, swallows up all my sorrow. I could myself go without a tear, (so at least I think) and leave all my friends and connections, in such

* Baptist Magazine, 1816, pp. 453, 454.

a glorious cause." After a striking illustration of the words of his text, in which he adverted to the ends of Christ's own mission, "to offer himself a sacrifice for sin, and by his blood to obtain eternal redemption for poor lost sinners," he called the attention of the missionaries to—the objects they must keep in view—the directions they must observe—the difficulties they would have to encounter—and the reward which they might expect. "Go, then," said he, in closing the address, "my dear brethren, stimulated by these prospects. We shall meet again. Crowns of glory await you and us. Each, I trust, will be addressed in the last day, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father—enter ye into the joy of your Lord.'"

This affectionate address was printed before the missionaries left England, and Mr. Carey has the following reference to it in his diary under the date of Jan. 29, 1794. "This evening, after a day of dejection, I had much relief in reading over Mr. Fuller's charge to us at Leicester: the affection there manifested almost overcame my spirits."*

It was doubtless an affecting stroke, both to Mr. Carey and the church at Leicester, to separate, never more to see each other in the flesh. They esteemed him highly for his work's sake; but though greatly affected at the thought of losing a faithful pastor, they offered no objection to his going. "His church mourns," said Mr. Fuller, "but no one murmurs." "We have been praying," said one of them, "for the spread of Christ's kingdom among the heathen; and now God requires *us* to make the first sacrifice to accomplish it." They also vindicated his conduct individually, when censured by the adversaries of the mission.

A mission to Bengal having now been decided on, a great difficulty arose as to the means of conveying the missionaries to the place of their destination. Mr. Thomas having been in the service of the East India Company, could go in one of their ships; but for Mr. Carey no such liberty could be obtained. Mr. Thomas ventured, however, to take him on board, with the leave of the captain; but when they arrived at the Isle of Wight, they were compelled to quit the vessel, the captain having understood that an information would be laid against him for taking them without the Company's permission. They immedi-

* Periodical Accounts, vol. i. p. 166.

ately repaired to Mr. Carey's dwelling, at Hackleton, near Northampton, and after a little time prevailed on Mrs. Carey and the family to accompany them on the voyage, as soon as a safe conveyance could be provided. In the course of a few days, a Danish East Indiaman arrived in the Downs from Copenhagen, and leave was obtained from the Danish Court to take the missionaries and their families to Serampore, where they would be under the protection of the Danish Governor. On the 13th of June, 1793, they embarked in the Kron Princesse Mariæ, captain Christmas, commander; and on the 17th of October following, the vessel arrived in the Bay of Bengal.

The Baptist Mission having thus arisen out of the labours and writings of Mr. Fuller, powerfully seconded and applied by his coadjutor, he immediately became the life and soul of the undertaking; replenishing its resources, and directing all its movements. The labours of these eminent men had a reciprocal influence on each other; the successful and zealous Missionary imparted to the Secretary fresh energies, while the latter provided for the former, the means and the hopes of success. Never were two minds more congenial, more powerfully directed towards one object, or less ambitious of the honour arising from its attainment. Mr. Hinton, with great propriety, in his sermon at the Spa-Fields Chapel, compared the mission to a chain, of which Fuller and Carey constituted the two end links, one fixed in the east, and the other in the western world.*

Those who knew Mr. Fuller will not be surprised that so much must be said of this Mission, in the shortest Memoir of him that can be written. It was inseparable from his mind, and depended under God chiefly on his exertions. For several years, though these were unremitted, they seemed unavailing, so far as respected its great and ultimate object. No success attended the labours of the missionaries. Both parties, however, at home and abroad, cultivated the field, and waited patiently for the influences of heaven to water the seed sown. Friendless, and often pennyless, in a strange land, surrounded by those, and by scarcely any others but those, who were engrossed with the pursuit of wealth and ambition, and who lived in luxury and vain show, Carey, unseduced and undismayed, laboured in the acquisition of the native languages; in addressing the Hin-

* Anniversary Meeting, June 21, 1815.

doos and Mussulmans, not neglecting his own countrymen, and in translating the scriptures into Bengalee, the language which three fourths of the natives best understood. But for seven long years he was not gladdened by the existence of one consistent convert, though often disappointed by the most promising appearances. We shall form an improper estimate of the importance of these measures, great as they are in themselves, if we limit our view to their own direct and intrinsic value. They, in fact, first suggested and gave the impulse which produced those movements that have since issued in the erection of missionary societies on a much larger scale—in itineracies at home—in societies for the distribution of religious tracts—and in the mighty engine of THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, with its numerous auxiliaries, of which chain of admirable undertakings they were the first link.

So far from arrogating to himself any preeminent distinction, or of attaching to his own services any peculiar importance, Mr. Fuller not only admitted his brethren to an equal participation, but ascribed the success of the whole undertaking, under God, to their exertions. Pearce's activities in the first instance, and Sutcliffe's abiding counsels, were considered by him as the pillars of this spiritual temple. It is true, they were to him like Aaron and Hur; while he himself was Moses, the leader of the host. If others assisted in forming plans, or in giving their advice, he was the agent in every bold exertion; and to his energies they were indebted for the performance of an enterprise.

The labours which the barren years of this mission, as well as its future periods of success and extension, occasioned to Mr. Fuller, it is not easy to enumerate. They were witnessed and reported by others, though he dwelt little upon them in his own conversation. But the consultations which he held—the correspondence he maintained—the personal solicitations which he employed—the contributions he collected—the management of these and other funds—the selection, probation, and improvement of intended missionaries—the works which he composed and compiled on these subjects—the discourses he delivered—and the journeys he accomplished to extend the knowledge and to promote the welfare of the mission, required energy almost unequalled. Or if we retract this word, it is only on account of the next to supernatural talents and application discovered by a native of England, under thirty years of age, in the torrid zone, without liberal education, patronage

or friends, unfurnished with money, and scarcely supplied with the necessaries of life; often involved in domestic affliction, and suffering from ill health; who acquired the knowledge of numerous, and these the most difficult, oriental languages, dissimilar in structure and genius to those of Europe; who translated the scriptures in whole or in part into all of these; who printed, published, and circulated them; who composed and printed large and voluminous grammars of these languages in English; who has translated some of the principal works into English, from these languages, not one word of which he knew for more than twenty years before he began these tasks: all which acquisitions and employments were carried on without any view to emolument, receiving only bare support from the funds of the mission, while throwing into these his own salary of nearly two thousand pounds a year, as Professor of Sanscrit, Bengalee, and Mahratta, in the College of Fort William, and while engaged in cares, undertakings, and personal labours, of themselves more than sufficient for most other men, living in their native country, and in the most favourable circumstances! But to return:

The pecuniary concerns of the mission involved considerable expense and difficulty; all would depend on a successful appeal to the religious public, and the means must be provided by their voluntary contributions. Mr. Fuller, however, said at the commencement of the undertaking, "Only let us have faith, and we shall not want money;" and his indefatigable labours verified the truth of the remark. The sum of five hundred pounds was required to be raised in the space of three or four months, for the equipment of the first two missionaries; and more than twice the amount was readily provided. Encouraged by such an auspicious introduction, Mr. Fuller travelled and preached in almost all parts of the kingdom, collecting for the mission, and rousing attention to its concerns. During the whole of his career, he kept up a continual intercourse, presented the subject before the public in every variety of form, circulated intelligence with the utmost celerity, conducted all the correspondence between the missionaries and the society, generally made the annual collections in the city, superintended all the consignments, and was, in fact, the minister both for the foreign and home department.

Mr. Fuller's invitation to visit Scotland arose from the interest which the mission there created among Christians of all denominations. He had indeed been previously

known to the excellent Dr. Erskine, and was highly esteemed by several other persons; a correspondence connected with the subject of the first edition of "The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation," having been kept up for some time. His volume also on the moral tendency of Socinianism, had been very generally read, and was much admired and recommended by the friends of vital and practical religion; particularly by Dr. Erskine, Dr. Hunter, Professor of Divinity, Mr. M'Lean, and many others; but for two or three years the mission excited little attention among the Christians of the north. Nor did it obtain any support, until similar societies and undertakings were set on foot, which brought it into notice and consideration.

The Rev. Archibald M'Lean, pastor of the oldest Baptist church in Edinburgh, was one of the first persons in Scotland who took any particular interest in the Baptist Mission; but his labours in various ways tended much to engage the attention of the people of that country towards it. About the close of the year 1795, he preached a sermon to his own congregation on the subjection of all nations to Christ, from Psal. xxii. 27, 28; and urged upon his brethren the duty of using means for its accomplishment. The subject was at this time in a great measure new to the Baptist churches in Scotland, among whom the sentiment of Christ's *personal* reign upon earth, during the millenial period, had hitherto been almost universally prevalent. But the publication of that discourse, which the author followed up by a Narrative of the proceedings of the Baptist Society in England for propagating the gospel among the heathen, and which was accompanied by an earnest address to the people of God in Scotland, to use means for the universal spread of the gospel, tended eminently to engage the attention of the religious public to the subject. Shortly afterwards, Mr. M'Lean preached a sermon at the Circus, and collected more than a hundred pounds, which he remitted to the Baptist Missionary Society. The church of which he was the pastor, with several others, now made collections also, and remitted jointly about a hundred and fifty pounds more; a display of Christian liberality which called forth the gratitude of Mr. Carey and his missionary brethren. The subject was soon taken up generally throughout Scotland, both among the dissenting classes, and the members of the established church.

The concerns of the mission beginning to expand upon a wider scale, and demanding larger supplies than British

benevolence could conveniently furnish, Mr. Fuller made his first tour into Scotland in 1799. But being intimidated by the prospect of meeting these sons of the north, for whose intellectual abilities he always entertained a very high opinion, he took with him Mr. Sutcliffe of Olney, in whose wisdom and prudence he placed the utmost confidence.

The first idea of visiting Scotland was suggested to Mr. Fuller by a gentleman who at the same time remitted a hundred pounds for the service of the mission, when its funds were in a low state. He accepted the invitation, and arrived at Edinburgh in company with Mr. Sutcliffe, Oct. 11, 1799. Here he met with a reception due to his talents, his character, and the magnitude of the object in which he was engaged. To no class of Christians is the mission more indebted, than to our Scottish brethren, whose liberality not only essentially contributed to its prosperity, and gave a powerful stimulus to the activities of its principal agent, but whose multiplied kindnesses made a deep and lasting impression on the heart of the Secretary.

But our mercies come not without our trials. During this journey, the mournful tidings of Mr. Pearce's death overtook Mr. Fuller at Glasgow; and it was chiefly in contemplation of that event, that he engaged to supply this lack of service on the part of that eminently pious and active man. And in a letter from that place, dated Oct. 19th, 1799, Mr. Fuller expressed his first feelings of the irreparable loss, in the following abrupt exclamations. —"PEARCE is dead! Oh, Jonathan, thou wast slain upon thy high places! I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan! Oh that we may all emulate him! Try while your mind is warm to draw his character. Write all you can remember of him. Memoirs of his life must be published: he is another Brainerd." The Memoirs were published; and the religious world has long had an opportunity of judging of their merits.

Writing from Liverpool, on his return from the north, Mr. Fuller says, "I have now been out nearly thirty days; have travelled about eight hundred miles, and collected nearly as many pounds. I never saw such numerous congregations as at Edinburgh and Glasgow. My heart was dismayed at the sight, especially on a Lord's day evening. Nearly five thousand people attended; and some thousands it was supposed went away, unable to get in.

To-morrow I preach here three times, administer the Lord's supper, and make a collection for the mission. Considering my constant labours, preaching almost every evening in the week during my journey, my health is singularly good." After his return home, he found that he had travelled nine hundred miles, and collected full nine hundred pounds.

Agreeable intelligence having arrived from India, a day of public thanksgiving was held at Leicester, August 19, 1801. The warm and lively feelings which this event excited in the mind of Mr. Fuller, may be seen in the following extracts of a letter, which was dictated by him on that occasion, and sent from the Society to the Missionaries.

"Dearly beloved in our Lord!

"All your communications are grateful; but the last, up to Feb. 14, 1801, are peculiarly reviving to our hearts. And we are met this day to give thanks unto the Lord because he is good, for his mercy towards Israel endureth for ever, and because the foundation of the Lord's house is laid.

"The friendship of Messrs. Browne and Buchanan, and of people in general—the kindness of Governor Bie, and the Danish magistrates—the recovery of such of you as were afflicted—the finishing of the New Testament—the instances of mercy towards Europeans who have visited you—the effectual work among the Hindoos—in short, the prosperity and harmony of the church and family—are events for which we as well as you, brethren, are constrained to say, 'The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.'

"We can easily conceive how a sense of your unworthiness and unfitness for the work, should render the grace which has appeared to you overwhelming. We feel the same. It is truly astonishing, that God should work at all by such unworthy instruments as we are. But his mercy endureth for ever. He worketh for his great name's sake. To him be the glory for ever and ever!

"Under God we feel the most perfect confidence in you all. Your fidelity, your prudence, your zeal, and unwearied diligence, refresh our spirits. Though absent from you in the flesh, yet we are with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Your sorrows and your joys are ours. It affords us great satisfaction, that after having waited so long in the choice of missionaries, those who were last sent out

have proved so acceptable.* God seems to be binding us all to one another, by new and endearing ties. To those who first encountered the work, the brethren that followed looked up as their guides and directors, rejoicing in the day that enabled them to take their stand by their side;—while on the other hand, to those who followed after, the brethren that first arrived, have now to look, as the instruments by which they have been blessed. To their going may be attributed, your present comfortable settlement, the printing of the New Testament, &c. How precious are God's thoughts, thus to interweave our interests, and sweetly compel us to love one another!

"Be assured that we will do our utmost to meet your pecuniary wants; and such is the confidence which the religious public in Britain have in you, that we are persuaded they will never suffer you to fail for want of support. Many hundreds esteem it a privilege to give their annual token of love, and would feel sorry to be deprived of it.

"Present our grateful acknowledgments to Governor Bie for all his kindness. The Lord grant that he may partake of the blessings of that gospel, over the publishers of which he has extended his protection. Also to Messrs. Browne and Buchanan. May the richest of blessings rest on them in their respective labours for Christ! Present also our brotherly love to Mr. Forsyth, for the kindness he has shown in the days of affliction: also to Mr. Cunninghame, and Mr. Udney, for their manifold expressions of love towards the cause of Christ in Hindostan. We could wish to come ourselves, and give the right hand of fellowship to all the brethren. Accept our tenderest regards. The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits!"

After such an effusion of gratitude and love, after so much zeal, expended in so good a cause, we should hardly have expected that an enemy, under the Christian name, would presume to show his face, or attempt to damp the ardour by which the Baptist Missionary Society was animated. But the great exertions of their Secretary moved the envy of some masked individual, who addressed the following letter to him in the beginning of 1801, in which he endeavoured to press some objections, too frequently entertained by the doubtful friends of Christianity.

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*Dr. Marshman and Mr. Ward.

"Reverend Sir,

"Various and costly have been the exertions made for the propagation of the gospel among foreign nations. However laudable this labour of love may be, yet very considerable blame is attached to it; since the probability of greater success was in favour of a region far less distant, and more deserving, if charity begins at home. The wilful neglect of so large a part of our own land, is certainly unpardonable. It is true, that many an expensive and fatiguing journey has been undertaken, from south to north Britain, which has been well repaid by that which has taken, and is likely to take place. Yet you, sir, have rode post down to the Scotch metropolis, for the purpose of witnessing the state of that country, with a view to aid in concerting the best means, by which good might be done: but neither yourself, nor others, who at least ought to have had more consideration, did condescend to halt by the way, either to preach or inquire into the truly deplorable state of ignorance and irreligion, of that large and populous tract of country situated between York and Newcastle-upon-Tyne; or, in your flight back again, to give one thought towards the reformation of Cumberland, or heathenish Westmoreland.

"If we may judge of the success which attended the labours of Paulinus, the first missionary sent into these parts from Rome, the most pleasing benefits would be the consequence, upon the application of proper means. Paulinus is said to have baptized in one day, ten thousand persons in the river Swale, near Richmond in Yorkshire. The fair Otaheitan, the filthy Hottentot, and cruel East Indian, have each been sharers in missionary boon, at the expense of many thousands of pounds, many valuable lives, and the earnest labours of pious and zealous characters: and after all this, it cannot be said that one convert has been made; when, in all probability, if a tenth part had been done in favour of our own nation, some scores, perhaps hundreds, would have been praising God, and thanking you, which they might have done to all eternity. That the time for the calling of the Gentiles may be fast approaching, is the earnest prayer of one who is no director in these matters, but only an Observer."

Mr. Fuller in reply, stated, that he should not have thought it necessary to notice this letter, had it not afforded him an opportunity of answering an objection to foreign

missions which had been more than once advanced;—namely, *that it interferes with exertions in favour of our own countrymen.* It is on this account that the above letter finds a place in these pages, and with a view of preserving Mr. Fuller's valuable remarks upon the subject.

"I shall say but little," says he, "of the gross mistatement in the letter, as that my going to Scotland in 1799, was to 'witness the state of that country,' and to 'concert measures for doing good; that I did not condescend to halt and preach, between York and Newcastle;' and that 'it cannot be said that one convert has been made' in foreign missions. Such assertions must have arisen from the want of information. My journey was merely owing to a kind invitation given me to go and receive the donations of a number of my fellow Christians, who were willing to contribute to the giving of the holy scriptures to a great nation which had them not, as all the country between York and Newcastle have. My excursion was not a preaching one, though I did preach, and that to the utmost extent of my power. If I had taken half a year, I might have stopped much oftener than I did; but then it is possible my own congregation would have reminded me, that 'charity begins at home.' Whether success has or has not attended foreign missions, the accounts which have been printed of them, so far as human judgment can go in such matters, will enable us to decide.

"The only question that requires attention is, *Whether the spirit which, within the last ten years, has prompted Christians of different denominations to engage in foreign missions, has been favourable or unfavourable to the propagation of the gospel at home?*

"It is a fact which cannot be disputed, that within the above period there have been far greater exertions to communicate the principles of religion to the heathenised parts of England and Scotland, than at any former period within the remembrance at least of the present generation. If I were to say, they have been five times greater than before, I think I should not exceed the truth. Nor has that part of the kingdom to which the writer of the letter alludes, been overlooked.

"And how is this fact to be accounted for? Will this friend to village preaching, unite with Bishop Horsley, and say, it is the effect of political motives; and merely a new direction of the democratic current, which was interrupted by the treason and sedition bills in 1795? If so, we might

ask, How came it to commence two years before those bills were passed? How is it, that it should have prevailed, not so much among those Dissenters who took an eager share in political contention, as those who had scarcely ever concerned themselves in any thing of the kind? And finally, How is it that it should have extended to other nations as well as Britain, and other quarters of the world as well as Europe?

"But I suppose the writer of this letter would not attribute it to this cause. How then will he account for it? The truth most manifestly is, that the very practice of which he complains has been more conducive to that which he recommends, than all other causes put together. It is natural that it should be so. A longing desire after the spread of the gospel, when once kindled, extends itself in all directions. The same principle which induces some to leave their native land, to impart the heavenly light, induces others to contribute and pray for their success. And while they are doing this, it is next to impossible to forget their own countrymen; who, though they have access to the written word, yet live without God in the world.

"It is very singular that the example of 'Paulinus,' who came to Britain as a missionary from Rome, about the year 596, and is said to have baptized ten thousand people in the river Swale, should be alleged against foreign missions. Allowing his converts to have been real christians, which however is very doubtful, according to the Observer, there was much blame attached to his labours of love, since the probability of greater success was in favour of Italy; a country far less distant than Britain, and more deserving of his charity, 'which should have begun at home.'

"Unfortunately for this proverb, I do not recollect ever hearing it alleged but for a selfish purpose. Go and ask relief for some distressed object, of a wealthy man. His answer is, 'Charity begins at home.' True, and it seems to *end* there. And by the reasoning of this Observer, his would do the same. So long as there are any sinners in Britain, we must confine our attention to them. A person of a contracted mind, once objected to the exportation of our manufactures. We have many poor people in England, said he, who are half naked, and would be glad of them; and 'charity begins at home.' He was informed however by a merchant, that to send our commodities abroad is not the way to impoverish, but to enrich ourselves, and

even to furnish the poor with clothing, by providing them with plenty of good employment."*

In the beginning of June 1804, Mr. Fuller embarked for Ireland, to visit the Baptist churches in that part of the kingdom, and collect for the mission. Two of his children being dangerously ill at the time, he left home under great depression, and took an affectionate leave of his people. In a letter written at the close of the Sabbath, he says, "I have baptized five persons to day, and preached my farewel sermon to the church, from John xvii. 21. I considered, (1.) The object prayed for—union—'that they all may be one.' (2.) The model of it—the union between the Father and the Son, or between the Lawgiver and the Saviour, in the work of human redemption—'as thou Father art in me, and I in thee.' (3.) Its influence on mankind—'that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.'"

Arriving in Dublin, he found himself in a new state of society, and was much struck with the appearance of the lower classes, who seemed to be immersed in poverty and superstition. On the first Sabbath his heart was dismayed at seeing only a few genteel people, not more than forty or fifty, scattered about in a place of worship that would hold four hundred; in the afternoon, not two hundred, in a place that would contain nearly two thousand; and in the evening about forty more. These congregations were so different from what he had seen in Scotland, that he said, having no body of common people mixed with them, they appeared "like the heads at Temple Bar." Afterwards, however, his hearers increased to between fifteen hundred and two thousand.

The congregations, he observes, are almost exclusively composed of Protestants, for scarcely any of the Catholics will attend; and those of them who are servants in Protestant families are seldom known to unite in domestic worship. The Protestants are of various denominations, as in England; but amongst the generality there is a great want of spiritual religion, and a lamentable indifference towards the fundamental truths of the gospel. Those who are lax in doctrine, appeared to be equally so in point of morals; pleading for a harmless game of cards, for the innocence of the stage, and the virtue of theatrical performers. Mr. Fuller was requested to administer the Lord's supper to one of the churches in his own connection, where these

* Biblical Magazine, vol. ii. pp. 165—168.

things were tolerated; but he could not conscientiously comply, and therefore declined to hold fellowship with them.

During his stay in Dublin, some of the Sandemanians wanted to dispute with him; and others represented that he did not preach 'the gospel.' But their cold speculations by no means suited the genial warmth of his own system, nor comported with the object he had in view; he therefore avoided controversy, and laboured to cultivate the religion of the heart. He acknowledged that they were very calm, conversant with the scriptures, and adroit in argument; but, says he,

> 'Tis Athens' owl, and not mount Sion's dove,
> The bird of knowledge, not the bird of love.

One of the most distinguishing traits in the Irish Sandemanians, he observed, was, the marked separation made in public worship, between those whom they reckon believers and unbelievers; not merely in their doctrine, which ought to be discriminative, but in the very seats they occupy. Unbelievers must not *sit* with believers, nor will they engage in public prayer where they are mixed. "I asked one of them," said Mr. Fuller, "whether he would engage in family prayer, if his wife, being present, were in his account an unbeliever? He answered, No: and I find that family worship is nearly, if not wholly neglected among them. A respectable minister from Edinburgh, who had much intercourse with these professors, afterwards confirmed to me this statement. He also told them and me, that Sandemanianism as a system was, in his opinion, the most destructive of pure religion of any thing in any sect; acknowledging at the same time, that very little regard was paid to family worship; that their children were brought up without discipline, and in habits of dissipation."*

It may be interesting to know what opinion Mr. Fuller entertained on the much agitated question of Catholic emancipation, especially as that opinion was formed during

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* It may be proper to remark, that the persons here denominated 'Sandemanians,' are rather a distinct branch of that description, who are otherwise called Separatists, and are chiefly the followers of Mr. John Walker, late fellow of Trinity college, Dublin; and perhaps, should not be confounded with the general body of Sandemanians in other parts of the United Kingdom.

his stay in Ireland, and while he had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the actual state of the country. Probably, also, the expedient suggested for adjusting those claims, will approve itself to the judgment of the more temperate and reflecting part of the community. A letter from which the above extracts are made, contains the following judicious paragraph:

"I can perceive," says Mr. Fuller, "that the galling circumstance to the Irish is, that about a seventh part of the population rule the rest; and hence they are ever meditating some sort of revenge. If Ireland could be considered as insulated from Britain, it would seem right that so great a majority should have the rule; but if it be only an integral part of one great empire, the case is quite altered; for if the Catholics could gain the ascendency, there appears to be no doubt but they would persecute, if not massacre the Protestants; and such a state of things would endanger the British empire. If, indeed, they would tolerate the Protestants, in the same manner as the Protestants tolerate them, it would be reasonable that the Catholic population should have the ascendency. But if not, they are like a mob in one of our counties, which, though they may have the great mass of the people on their side, ought not to be suffered to bear rule. Yet I should rejoice to see the Catholics emancipated, and placed on an equal footing with the Protestants, England at the same time keeping up a strong military force to prevent their doing any mischief. I wish at least that the experiment should be tried. If they attempted to abuse their privileges, let them be afterwards curtailed. It has been said by some, that the zeal for Catholic emancipation has nearly subsided; and that if they had their liberty, they would now be friendly. Yet it is a fact, that though when the Dublin Catholics collect for a public charity, they invite Protestants, and they go and give; yet at Protestant charities, the opulent Catholics, when invited in return, will neither go nor give, at least but very rarely."

Having collected about a hundred and fifty pounds for the mission, and preached in several parts of the country, Mr. Fuller returned home the first week in July, and found his family in very painful circumstances; one child died during his absence, and another, the source of his greatest troubles, was dangerously ill at a distance from home, and not likely to recover. Reflecting on his late excursion, he says, "I have enjoyed but little pleasure in my visit to

Ireland. The state of my family at home, the contentions of the Sandemanians at Dublin, the disorders among the Baptists—all together, overwhelmed my spirits. Yet I hope I have derived some profit. The doctrine of the Cross is more sweet to me than ever, and some of my best times in preaching have been from such texts as these; 'Unto you that believe, *he* is precious—That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee—He hath sent me to preach the acceptable year of the Lord—He that hath the Son hath life—Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him.' Oh that for me to live may be Christ! I wish never to preach another sermon but what shall bear some relation to him. I see and feel more and more, that except I eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, I have no life in me, either as a Christian or as a minister."

This visit also produced some good effects on the general interests of religion in that part of the kingdom. Mr. Fuller attempted a reformation among the Baptists; and not succeeding in this, he assisted in forming a new society, founded on better principles. After his return he drew up some "Remarks on the State of the Baptist Churches in Ireland;" alleging in particular, that several members of the church in Swift's Alley, Dublin, "had disowned some of the most important doctrines of the gospel; such as the Trinity, the atonement, and justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ; that not only the church of which they were members refused to exclude them, but that a motion for that purpose was rejected by their general Association; and that on this ground a considerable part of the church in Swift's Alley separated, and in August, 1804, formed themselves into a new church."

This Report was read and approved at a meeting of the Baptist ministers in London; it was afterwards adopted by a committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, and ordered to be printed. The Irish churches published their Circular Letter in 1805, and admitted in reply, that there was a great deficiency among them, both in regard to vital godliness and church discipline, which they deeply lamented. At the same time they made a declaration of their religious sentiments, with the view of vindicating themselves from the charges contained in the "Remarks," and complained that they had been greatly misunderstood and misrepresented.

Their statement having been admitted into a periodical,* Mr. Fuller made his animadversions upon it through the same medium. "In this Vindication, (he says) it is observable, (1.) That the 'declaration of their religious sentiments' makes no mention of *an atonement*, or of *imputed righteousness*. (2.) That the article on the Trinity is worded in so cautious a manner, as to be capable of being understood of a modal or Swedenborgian trinity. (3.) That if this 'declaration' of their sentiments be *not* intended to leave room for those who disown three divine Persons in the Godhead, the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, and justification by his righteousness imputed; and if, while they warn their members against 'conformity to the world,' they do *not* mean to retain such characters among them as plead for the innocence of the theatre and the card table; but are in good earnest resolved to disown them, the breach at Swift's Alley would at once be healed. For those who have withdrawn, have declared in their letter to the church 'that if at any future time the church should restore that purity of communion which is essential to a christian society, they shall be ready to join heart and hand with them.' But (4.) If this declaration of their sentiments *be* intended to leave room for such characters, the whole is a mere subterfuge; and instead of proving the 'Remarks' erroneous, or the separation schismatical, it abundantly justifies both the one and the other."

Since, then, a partial reformation has been effected, true religion has in some measure been revived, and fresh efforts are making by an Itinerant Society in England, to disseminate the gospel in various parts of the sister kingdom.

To detail the numerous missionary engagements which followed, during the last ten years of Mr. Fuller's life, would be no easy task; they admitted of but little intermission, and the same unwearied course was pursued till he finished it with joy. It was not usual with him to make any Journal of these occurrences. Once, however, he did so, at the request of a friend; and the substance of it given in the following pages, in connection with various subsequent events, will furnish a specimen of his general labours in the missionary cause.

It will be seen that wherever he went, he was always endeavouring to disseminate the knowledge of the truth, by conversation as well as preaching; exciting a spirit of in-

* Theolog. and Biblical Mag. for 1805, pp. 387—392.

quiry, and rousing the attention of all around him. Various instances of this kind are exhibited, in connection with his missionary pursuits; and the mind is regaled with the detail of several interviews with persons of different sentiments, the wisdom and prudence with which they were conducted, and the strong sensation which his presence and his labours every where produced. From the time that he left home on this occasion, till his return, scarcely an hour seems to have elapsed, without finding full employment for his faculties, and putting all his energies to the test. The Journal also presents us with much interesting information on the general state of religion in the north.

CHAPTER V.

Journal of a Tour through Scotland, in July, 1805, to collect for the Printing of the Scriptures in the Eastern Languages: Written by Mr. Fuller—his Labours in counteracting the Opposition of the East India Company—Fourth and Fifth Visits to Scotland—Missionary Labours continued.

"HAVING made collections at Lincoln, Hull, Scarborough, and Alnwick, I arrived at Edinburgh, on Saturday night at eleven o'clock, June 29; where I was very kindly received by my respected friend and his family.

"Lord's day morning, June 30, I received an invitation from the little Baptist church, meeting at Cordiner's Hall, to preach to them in the afternoon, and administer the Lord's Supper; and to continue these services during my stay at Edinburgh. In the forenoon I preached at Mr. Aikman's Tabernacle, where a second church of the new Independents assemble. In the afternoon I went to Cordiner's Hall, where we had about two hundred hearers; but the church members were not more than twelve or fourteen. They were baptized by Mr. Page, while a student in Edinburgh. I hope their study is to cultivate christian love, and to avoid contention. One of the Tabernacle preachers lately joined them; but their thoughts are turned towards a young man as their pastor, who is now with brother Sutcliffe at Olney. I preached this afternoon from 1 John iv. 10, and enjoyed more solemn pleasure than at any other time while I was in Scotland. In

the evening I preached at Mr. Haldane's Tabernacle to about three thousand people, and had an interesting opportunity.

"In the week I travelled in company with my friend, and preached at Dalkeith and Haddington. On the former of these excursions, we had an interesting conversation on some points lately in dispute between myself and Mr. Abraham Booth.*

"During my week's stay at Edinburgh, I perceived that some who had been highly serviceable in carrying on the work of God, were verging fast towards Sandemanianism, and I trembled for the consequences. The warmth with which they contend that there is no difference between the faith of devils and that of christians, as to the nature of it, will render faith a mere bone of contention, and their zeal will all be consumed in the tithing of mint and cummin. Perhaps also this will be the last time that I shall be admitted into their pulpits.

"One afternoon we had the company of six or seven of the leading men of this connection, and they all beset me on these topics, but in perfect good humour. They contended for what they call 'the exhortations of the brethren;' that is, that in the public worship of the Lord's day some part of the time should be taken up by one, two, or more of the private brethren, standing up one by one, and speaking from a text of scripture. The officiating pastor for the time, stands up and says, 'If any of the brethren have a word of exhortation, we shall be glad to hear him.' Then one rises, and speaks a few minutes; then another, and sometimes a third. After this, the pastor preaches.

"I asked the company what scriptural authority there was for this practice. They referred me to Heb. x. 25. 'Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but *exhorting one another;* and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.' I said I always thought that this was meant of exhorting one another *to assemble*, and not *when assembled.* I might also have added, that according to the preceding verse, there is the same reason for appropriating a part of public worship to '*considering* one another,' and so of having a silent meeting, as for appropriating another part to *exhorting* one another;

* A few particulars of this conversation, and of some others in the course of the Journal, will appear in a subsequent Chapter.

and the former might as well be made a christian ordinance as the latter.

"It is true, mention is made in the New Testament of 'exhortation.' But it was not common to the brethren: it was the work of persons in office. 'He that exhorted was to attend to *exhortation*,' as well as he that teacheth, on teaching. It is a branch of the pastoral office, which was 'to teach, and to *exhort*, and to reprove, with all longsuffering and doctrine.'

"There was a practice indeed in the primitive churches, called 'prophecying,' which they might all engage in, one by one: but this, if it contained nothing *extraordinary*, was nevertheless a gift which every one did not possess. See 1 Cor. xiv. 1. And the words, 'ye may all prophesy, one by one,' means only those who had the gift of doing so to edification. To leave it to every one who chooses to stand up, and engage in public worship, is neither to edify the church, nor tending to the conviction of unbelievers: yet such was the design of primitive prophesying, 1 Cor. xiv. 24. Another evening when in company, I was asked by a warm Sandemanian, Whether God was to be known, or a sinner convinced of sin, by any other medium than the cross of Christ. I answered, God is not to be known *fully*, through any other medium; but he has made himself known in part, by the works of creation and providence; so much so, as to leave the heathen 'without excuse.' The moral law is also a medium, through which is 'the knowledge of sin.'

"One of the company denied, that the law alone could convince men of sin. But as he acknowledged a few days afterwards, that he was betrayed into some extremes in that conversation, I do not know that I ought to consider it as his settled opinion. Yet I have been since informed that it is almost a fixed principle among them, that there is no conviction of sin but by the gospel. I have no doubt, indeed, but that all hope of mercy arises from the gospel, and that the death of Christ is adapted to convince of sin; but then it is *as honouring the law*. Nothing can be more self-evident than what is expressly asserted in the scriptures; that 'by the law is the knowledge of sin.' Disown the law, and there is nothing in the death of Christ, or in the gospel, which has any such tendency.

"During the week, I called on Mr. M'Lean, and talked over our controversy. He was very friendly, and thanked me for calling on him. I told him I was not sure that I

should never take any notice of his performance; but my hands had hitherto been too full, and perhaps might continue to be so. I mentioned to him some things which I thought were far from brotherly. He replied, If it were to do again, there are some things which I should omit.*

"On Lord's day evening, July 6, I made a collection at Mr. Haldane's Tabernacle, where nearly four thousand people attended. I was given to expect but a small collection, as the Tabernacle churches were then sending out two missionaries to Tranquebar. There were, however, a great many Kirk people present, who were very cordial, and helped much, as was supposed, to augment the sum, which amounted to one hundred and twenty six pounds. One of the Kirk ministers at Edinburgh did all in his power to promote the object.

"On Tuesday, July 8, I set off, in company with my friend, on a tour of three weeks; preaching and collecting every night except Saturdays, and commonly three times on a Lord's day. On Tuesday we reached Dunfermline, where I preached in the pulpit of the celebrated Ralph Erskine, and collected about thirty pounds.

"Wednesday, we went to Kirkaldy, where I met with extraordinary kindness, both from the Kirk ministers and the Seceders, who seemed to vie with each other in goodness. I named this place *Kind Kirkaldy*. We collected about forty pounds, and after preaching went a stage.

"Thursday, the 10th, travelling through Fifeshire, we breakfasted at Cupar, where my companion had a friend. who called upon us at the inn. I suppose I was unknown to the stranger, who was a warm Sandemanian, and I enjoyed the treat of their conversation incognito. After it was over, I said to my friend, Verily, the faith of a Sandemanian ought not to be charged with being dead or inoperative: it operates like fire under a cauldron, causing his his blood to boil against all that do not think with him!— About noon we crossed the Tay, and soon arrived at Dundee; where we presently found ourselves in the midst of a circle of friends, who had come to meet us. During the interview, I was asked to give my ideas of the atonement and substitution of Christ, and a long conversation

* The Editor does not understand this of the general *sentiments* in dispute between these two eminent men, but of those insinuations which Mr. Fuller thought "were far from brotherly;" several of which were afterwards alluded to in his *Strictures on Sandemanianism.*

ensued. After the sermon, at which twenty three pounds were collected, a large company came to spend the evening. I found they had laid their accounts with a conversation on various subjects till midnight; but I was entirely worn out with labour, and obliged to go abruptly to bed.

"Friday, the 11th, we proceeded to Montrose, where we were treated very kindly; and after the sermon, about fourteen pounds were collected.

"Saturday, the 12th, reached Aberdeen at about six in the evening. Paid my respects to several of the ministers, and adjusted the work of the Sabbath. I agreed to spend the forenoon with a few Baptists, who meet in an upper room; the afternoon, to preach and collect at the Independents, in Mr. Haldane's connection; and in the evening, at the Independents' place, called the Lock Chapel.

"Lord's day. At the morning meeting I found eight or ten Baptists, residing in Aberdeen. They were not in a state of fellowship; and whether they were sufficiently united to be formed into a church, appeared rather doubtful. At the same time, three persons applied to me for baptism. The first was a young man who had been a Socinian, but professed of late to be convinced of the way of salvation through the atonement of Christ, and of all the other corresponding doctrines. The next was a simple hearted man, with whose religious profession I was well satisfied. The third was a woman, and her's was a singular case.

"As I was going to the morning meeting, I was called aside by a respectable minister, and told to this effect—'You will be requested to baptize a woman before you leave Aberdeen. I have no prejudice against her on account of her being a Baptist; but I think it my duty to tell you that she was a member of one of our churches in this neighbourhood, and was excluded for bad conduct.' What conduct? 'Dishonesty towards her creditors.' Very well; I thank you for the information, and will make a proper use of it.

"Though I was applied to at the morning meeting to baptize these persons, I did not hear their personal professions till after the evening sermon. They then came to my inn, where I conversed with each one apart. When the woman was introduced, the following is the substance of what passed between us. Well, Margaret, you have lived in the world about forty years; how long do you think you have known Christ? 'A little more than a year.' What, no longer? 'I think not.' And have you never professed

to know him before that time? 'Yes, and was a member of an Independent church for several years.' A member of a church, and did not know Christ! How was that? 'I was brought up to be religious, and deceived myself and others in professing to be so.' And how came you to leave that church? 'I was cut off.' What, because you were a Baptist? 'No, because of my bad conduct.' Of what then had you been guilty? 'My heart was lifted up with vanity, I got in debt for clothes and other things; and then prevaricated, and did many bad things.' And it was for these things they cut you off? 'Yes.' And do you think they did right? 'Oh yes.' And how came you to the knowledge of Christ at last? 'When I was cut off from the church, I sunk into the deepest despondency—I felt as an outcast from God and man—I wandered about, speaking as it were to nobody, and nobody speaking to me. My burden seemed heavier than I could bear. At that time a passage or two of scripture came to my mind, and I was led to see that through the cross of Christ there was mercy for the chief of sinners. I wept much, and my sin was very bitter. But I saw there was no reason to despair, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. It is from thence I date my conversion.' And do the minister, and the church of which you were a member, know of all this? 'Yes.' Why did you not go and confess it before them, and be restored? 'Partly because I have removed my situation, some miles from them; and partly because I felt in my conscience that I was a Baptist.'

"After the conversation I saw the minister who had told me of her, and informed him of the whole; adding, that the church in his connection had done well in excluding Margaret, and the Lord I hoped had blessed it to her salvation. He could not object to the propriety of my conduct in baptizing her, on my own principles. Next morning I rose at five o'clock, and baptized the three persons at a mill dam, about five miles from the city; whither we went in a post chaise, and returned about eight o'clock. There were upwards of a hundred people present.

"At nine we set off on our return from the north; and after travelling about forty miles, I stopped and preached at the Methodist chapel at Brechin.

"Tuesday morning, July 15, set off for Perth; where I preached and collected for the mission. The clergyman of the parish, a venerable old man, was very kind to us.

Here also I received a donation of twenty pounds from a gentleman in the neighbourhood.

"Wednesday, set off for Stirling, about forty miles. I preached and collected at the Burgher meeting-house; but it seemed to them a strange thing for a Baptist to be in their pulpit. The minister was not present; but he afterwards appeared at my lodgings, and supped with us.

"Thursday, by dinner time, we reached Glasgow, where we met with an affectionate reception. Soon after dinner, I received an invitation from the Baptists, to be present at their church meeting that afternoon, and to give them a word of exhortation. With this I cheerfully complied; and at the conclusion, requested to commune with them on the following Lord's day, which was as cheerfully granted.

"Friday, the 18th, I preached at the Tabernacle in the evening, for Mr. Ewing. Spent the next day partly in retirement.

"Lord's day the 20th. In the forenoon I preached at Albion chapel, the second Independent church, and collected nearly eighty pounds. In the afternoon I preached for the Baptists, and communed with them. They are a poor people, and but few in number; yet they collected about eight pounds. This little church also supports a mission in the Highlands of Scotland, where a new society has lately been formed. I have since had a letter from their missionary, in which he writes as follows:

"'Bellanock by Inverary, Argyleshire. We have raised a little church here; the number of our members is only twelve; but I hope they are fully convinced of the insufficiency of any thing to save them but the righteousness of Christ. There is one case rather remarkable; namely, that of a notorious swearer and drinker, who prided himself in excelling every other person in these practices. He heard me occasionally for three years, without any effect. At length it pleased God to show him the evil of his way, and also the way of escape through Jesus Christ. He was added to our church in May, 1804. The concern of this man was observed by all around him; his change of character was very manifest. He had the courage to set up the worship of God in his master's family, where he had so often profaned his holy name. This had a happy effect in the end: it led his master, who had hitherto lived as careless and ignorant as himself, to consider his way, to search the scriptures, and to attend more closely to the preaching

of the gospel. The issue is, I trust, that it has been blessed to his soul. Now he not only worships God in his family, but recommends Jesus to his friends as the only Saviour, urging them to flee to him for refuge from the wrath to come. I hope he will be shortly added to our number.'

"In the evening at Glasgow, I preached at the Tabernacle, to nearly four thousand people. They had lately collected for the Bible Society, yet their contributions for the mission amounted to a hundred pounds.

"Monday, July 21, I went to the country seat of Mr. David Dale, who added fifty pounds to the collection. I preached with much interest that evening at Cambuslang, where many of the Glasgow friends were present: but my strength began to fail me.

"Tuesday, after dinner, I took leave of Glasgow, and went and preached that night to about sixteen hundred people at Paisley. The collection amounted to nearly forty pounds. I here met with another Tabernacle minister, who had become a Baptist, and about half his church with him; but them I saw not. I could not get alone that night; but rose early in the morning, and walked the fields with him before breakfast. He wished me to write to him after my return; but I was afraid to promise, for want of time.

"Wednesday, the 23d, set of for Greenoch. I was pressed to call and preach, and collect at Port Glasgow, and that by the clergyman of the place, who wrote to me at Paisley; but I could not accomplish it. At Greenoch we had a good auditory and collection; but after preaching, all my strength was dried up as a potsherd. I here found three or four young people who were Baptists, and of whom the Tabernacle Independents of the place, where we lodged, spoke in the highest terms. Understanding that I was to spend the next Lord's day to Kilwinning in Ayrshire, with another Baptist minister from the Tabernacle connection, they resolved to walk over, and join with us at the Lord's table, though it was above thirty miles distant.

"Thursday, July 24, travelled nearly forty miles to day along the western coast, bearing southward. About six o'clock we reached Saltcoats. Here I found that the parish minister, on hearing that I was to collect at the Burgher meetinghouse, resolved to have a sermon at the same hour in the church, and a collection for the Bible Society. He said, however, that if I chose to preach the

sermon in the church, and let the collection be applied to the Bible Society, I was welcome to do so. As soon as this was mentioned to me by another person, I immediately sent to the clergyman, offering to relinquish my own object, and if he was agreeable, to preach the sermon in the church, in favour of the Bible Society. This he acceded to, and I called on him before worship. I then observed, that he must be aware of what he had proposed being contrary to the rules of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland; and that I should be sorry, if any ill consequences were to follow on my account. He replied, that his presbyters were well disposed, and he had no fears on that head. I then preached the sermon, and pleaded with all the energy I could for the Bible Society. After worship, I went to my inn; then called to sup and lodge with the clergyman. (Such is the custom in Scotland.) While sitting in his house, I told him I felt happy in the opportunity of expressing my regard for the Bible Society, and requested him to add my guinea to the collection. But during my call at the inn, after worship, he had consulted with his friends, on the subject of my having been deprived of a collection. He therefore answered me by saying, 'I cannot except your guinea; and moreover, I must insist on your accepting half the collection for your object; and you must make no objection whatever to it. Such is the conclusion of our Session.' Finding him quite resolute, I yielded and took half the collection; which however did not amount to six pounds.

"At Saltcoats I met with one of the Baptist ministers from the Tabernacle connection, of whom there are nine or ten, who have lately been baptized. They have formed new churches, which are the only ones in Scotland with whom either myself or any other English Baptist would be admitted to communion. The New Baptists from the Tabernacle connection do not unite with the old Scotch Baptists; indeed many have come off from the old connection to join them. I trust they are not striving to make Baptists, but to make christians; and God is greatly blessing them in several places.

"In the course of my journey, I made inquiry of several persons amongst them, *why* they did not unite with the old Baptists? Some answered, because many of them disbelieve the vicarious nature of Christ's active obedience, considering all that Christ did in obeying the law, as only

qualifying him for making an atonement; and that the whole of that for the sake of which we are justified, is his sacrifice. Besides this they alleged, there was little or nothing of the life of religion amongst them.

"Meeting with an intelligent man who had separated himself from the old Baptists, I asked him why he had left them. He answered, 'partly because there was scarcely any zeal amongst them for the promotion of Christ's kingdom, or the conversion of sinners; and partly because the principle on which their members were received into fellowship was such, that the great body of them must needs be men of no religion.' What principle is that? 'To become a member with them, it is only necessary to declare your creed, and conform to their rules. They disclaim all inquiry at that time, as to the effects which their faith has had upon them.' I understood by this, that they disclaimed what we in England call a relation of experience, as necessary to church communion.

"Whether these accounts be accurate, I cannot say; but they agree with what struck me on my former visit to Scotland, in 1799. Being then requested to baptize a Pedobaptist minister, and several of his people, I asked them individually for some account of their personal christianity. They all, if I recollect right, began by telling me their creed; or what they believed about the fall of Adam, and the way of salvation; and if I had been content, they would have gone on and ended in things of that nature.

"In conversing with two or three others of the Tabernacle Baptists, I also found there were many among the Baptists of the old connection, who paid no regard to family worship, to family government, or to the sanctification of the Lord's day; judging that when the worship was over, it was as lawful to talk or deal in worldly matters as on another day. Indeed I met with one of them who was of that opinion, and who demanded proof from the New Testament, of the obligation of christians to refrain from labour on the first day.

"I answered (1.) It appeared to me to be a *moral* duty to keep *a* sabbath, or it would not have made a part of the ten commandments; and that which is moral is of perpetual obligation. (2.) I asked, whether he did not consider what in the New Testament is called 'the Lord's day,' as meaning the first day of the week? He said he did. I then observed, its being called the Lord's day, implies that it should be devoted to the Lord. The same phraseology

is used of the ordinance of breaking bread. And as Paul argued from its being the Lord's supper, that they ought not, while attending to that, to eat their own supper; so on the same principle we may argue from its being the Lord's day, that we ought not, during that day, to pursue our own affairs.

"Friday, July 25, we went to Kilmarnock, where we met with much friendly treatment. I preached at the Burgher meeting-house, and collected about eleven guineas.

"We had a good deal of conversation at the inn, between a Baptist minister of the new connection, my fellow travellers, and myself. As we sat at supper, the minister addressed himself to my Sandemanian companion, and said, I should like to hear some fair meaning given to such passages of scripture as these: 'Repent and believe the gospel —They repented not, that they might believe—If God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth.' How does this language comport with the notion of repentance being the *effect* of faith? I know there must be faith in God, and in his law, ere we can repent of having sinned against him. I know also that faith in Christ as a Saviour, is followed by continued repentance: but I do not see how the above passages can be explained, consistently with *no* repentance preceding it.

"I had no idea till then, that this minister entertained views on this subject so congenial with my own. My companion, however, seemed desirous of evading the conversation, or to turn it into another channel. Nay, said I, answer him. This he did not attempt; but merely alleged some consequences which he supposed would follow from the statement just given. Finding his mind a little ruffled, we dropped the subject.

"Saturday, we returned to Irvine, where we slept.

"Lord's day, July 27, went to Kilwinning, and heard preaching in the morning at the Baptist place of worship, which consisted of an upper room, and was much crowded. I preached in the afternoon, and the pastor administered the Lord's supper: our travelling company joined as occasional communicants. In the evening, I turned out, and preached to seven or eight hundred people on the green. We afterwards called on the parish minister, and were treated with kindness and respect.

"Monday morning, we visited several of the members of the Baptist church, who resided at Irvine. After dinner

we took leave of them, and proceeded to Ayr, where I was to preach that evening. At Ayr, we met with great kindness from the Burgher minister. As soon as the service was ended, I took an affectionate leave of my fellow travellers, who, after journeying with me three weeks, and rendering me every accommodation in their power, now returned home; and I was obliged, in order to reach Liverpool in time, to travel nearly two hundred and fifty miles by Thursday night.

"Tuesday forenoon, having travelled all night from Ayr, I reached Dumfries; preached, and collected there that evening. The Tabernacle minister treated me with much brotherly kindness. Twenty-five pounds from his friends were added to our collection; and as soon as the preaching was over, and we had taken a little refreshment, he traveled post with me all night to Carlisle.

"Arriving at Carlisle on Wednesday morning, July 30th, I there took the stage for Lancaster, where I stopped for the night. Reached Liverpool on Thursday, where I met with kind attentions. But as my remarks were meant only for the tour of Scotland, I here conclude them, only with observing that I travelled nearly thirteen hundred miles, and collected about as many pounds.

"One thing struck my mind in Scotland more especially, which I must just mention. The Scottish Independents are more rigid than the English; so much so that they have generally excluded the Baptists from their communion. Yet when expelled from their churches, they seem to retain no bitterness, nor contempt towards them; but on the contrary appear to respect them for acting up to their convictions. At many places in England, if I had gone among a few Baptists, meeting in an upper room, and communed with them, at the same time that I was to preach and collect among the Independents on the other parts of the day, it would have given offence; and they would have been ready to say, especially if those Baptists had lately gone off from them, 'If you go among the Baptists, and encourage them, have your collections there also.' But neither at Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow, nor Greenoch, was this the case. They seemed to consider me as acting the part of an honest man, by encouraging those whom I thought to be in the right; and when I lodged with Independent ministers, they would invite the Baptist friends to visit me at their houses. I have, indeed, seen something of the same

spirit in England; but not so much of it as in Scotland. The latter seem generally to act more from principle, and less from temper than we do."

After having made collections in various parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, for several years, and the mission had met with the most liberal support from Christians of all denominations, both among churchmen and dissenters, and from several of the nobility and gentry, an event occurred which involved the Society, and its Secretary in particular, in great trouble and perplexity. Two missionaries having arrived in India, in 1806, they were not allowed to join their brethren at Serampore; and for the first time, the Government seemed disposed to act a hostile part towards them. When the news arrived in England, Mr. Fuller drew up a "Statement" of all the proceedings in the name of the Society; and went to London in June, 1807, "to sound the depth of the danger." On this occasion, he waited on several persons of high distinction, who were likely to favour the propagation of christianity, and kept his station at the helm, till the storm apparently died away.

Soon another storm arose, which filled the friends of the mission with great dismay, and furnished its adversaries with a momentary triumph. Mr. Fuller was accordingly called up to town in December following, and found on his arrival that Mr. Twining had printed a pamphlet, on the danger of interfering with the religious opinions of the natives of India, and intended to bring the subject before a Court of Proprietors. The Rev. Mr. Owen, Secretary to the Bible Society, replied to the pamphlet, as far as that institution was concerned; and its noble President presented a memorial to the Directors of the East India Company, and also to the Board of Control. Mr. Fuller invoked in vain the assistance of one or two eminent writers of his own denomination; he, therefore, "shut himself up," and in the course of two or three days produced his answer to Mr. Twining. Another pamphlet, by Major Scott Waring, speedily made its appearance, "full of all mischief and subtilty," and containing a preface of 76 pages, directed against the mission in India.

On hearing that some of the Directors at the India House contemplated the recal, not only of Professor Carey, but of Dr. Buchanan, and Mr. Browne, the Episcopal clergyman,

who were patronized by the Bible Society, Mr. Fuller obtained an audience of Marquis Wellesley, who had kindly afforded protection to the missionaries, during his Presidency in Bengal. At a second interview the noble Marquis avowed his decided opinion against the recal of the missionaries, "even if they had been in fault," because such a measure, he said, would be injurious to the interests of our eastern dominions; but he had no idea of any blame whatever attaching to the missionaries, nor of any alarm existing in India on their account. He also promised, that if the Ministry should ask his opinion, he would give it in this way without reserve.

The friends of the Indian missions were all on the alert, and employed their influence with the Proprietors of East India stock; they also called a general meeting at the new London Tavern, and appointed a committee to watch the motions of the enemy. A General Court of Proprietors was soon held at the India House, and Mr. Fuller, with many other friends, attended. "I got a good place in the gallery," says he, "where I could see and hear all that passed. The chairman and deputy chairman appeared superior to all the rest, in point of intelligence and manly firmness; and I could not but feel thankful that we had two such able men on our side. Some other business having been dispatched, up rose Mr. Twining, who after a speech of about ten minutes on the danger of interfering with the religious opinions of the natives of India, full of trembling and fear of not being thought a Christian, and after deprecating discussion on the subject; took the liberty to ask the Chairman, whether he would assure him that in future no such interference should be encouraged. *Chair.* 'The subject on which the honourable gentleman has touched, has by no means escaped our attention. We are alive to every thing which affects the wellbeing of the Company; and we ask for the confidence of the Proprietors, that we shall do every thing tending to promote it.' On the Chairman sitting down, an aged gentleman rose up to answer Mr. Twining; and he would indeed have answered him, but was interrupted by the *Chair.* 'Sir, there is no question before the court, and I cannot allow of any discussion at present.' Then rose up an alderman, one of Mr. Twining's friends, complaining of the general nature of the Chairman's answer, and hoping that the court would not break up without an assurance from him, that the religious opinions of the Hindoos should not be interfered

with. *Chair.* 'Sir, having stopt a gentleman on the other side, on the ground of informality, I cannot allow of your proceeding. I move that this court do now adjourn.'

"The court was accordingly dissolved by a show of hands; the designs of the enemy are for the present defeated, and we all came away in good spirits. I was pleased to find that we had so decided a majority of Proprietors, who all got together on one side of the house, which for distinction sake was named by some of the gallery critics, 'Methodist Corner.' The proceedings of this day will have an effect on the measures of the antichristian party, similar to that of a demonstration by a great army, when it barely makes its appearance, just letting them see that this country has some christians yet left in it. It is necessary however that the public mind should as much as possible be impressed with the subject, as the unbelievers will still be at work, and a watchful eye must be kept upon their movements."

These apprehensions were but too well founded; in the course of a few months the enemies of christianity renewed their operations, and found a pretext highly favourable to their ultimate design. The missionaries at Serampore had long been in the habit of distributing large quantities of religious tracts among the natives, in connection with their itinerant labours, and the circulation of the scriptures. It so happened, however, that in one of these tracts the *blessed* Mahomet was unfortunately called "a tyrant!" The infidels in India seized on this circumstance, to show how the religion of the country was abused; and by infusing fearful apprehensions into the government, they endeavoured to overwhelm the mission. The infidels at home re-echoed the song, made their appeal once more to the Court of Proprietors, in order to render their enmity more effective; and thus cut out fresh work for the indefatigable Secretary of the Baptist Society.

In the spring of 1808 he went again to London, "to sound the depth of the danger," and took his moorings accordingly. On his arrival, he obtained an interview with one of the East India Directors, who expressed his fears that the mission, if not rooted up, would be lopped of all its branches. At that instant letters arrived from the missionaries, containing all the particulars of what had transpired, together with a copy of their correspondence with the government of Bengal. From these documents it appeared, that in the month of June preceding, they had given

to a Persian convert a small tract, containing the life of Mahomet, to be translated into Persic, and which in the hurry of business was printed at Serampore, without having undergone the usual revision. The zeal of the translator, newly converted to christianity, had induced him to substitute, unobserved, the word tyrant for the proper name of the impostor. Early in September one of the converted natives in Calcutta gave the tract to a Mussulman interpreter, bidding him to read and answer it. The Mussulman took a readier way of defending the founder of his religion. He put the tract into the hands of one of the government Secretaries, who was glad of an opportunity of showing his opposition to the mission. He, therefore, sent to the college for Dr. Carey, demanding whether he knew of the tract in question being printed at Serampore. He replied that he did not; and on its being shown him, he expressed his concern, and promised to inquire how it happened.

The Secretary, mean while, laid it before the Governor General in Council, and a letter was immediately addressed to the Danish Governor of Serampore, making heavy complaints about the tract. Before this could be answered, another letter was sent to Dr. Carey, ordering the missionaries to desist from preaching at Calcutta, and to remove their press to that city, if they wished to circulate their tracts in the British territories. The missionaries were greatly distressed. They met for prayer, and tried to sing a hymn; but were stopped in the midst of the song by their own feelings, which turned all into sighs and sobs.

Having replied to the letter addressed to the Governor of Serampore, they at length obtained an audience of the Governor General of Bengal. Dr. Carey presented a copy of the Ramayuna,* which his lordship was pleased to accept, and afterwards very mildly observed, 'that the zeal of a missionary might induce him to oppose whatever hindered the progress of his undertaking, and that his ideas on many subjects would probably be different from those to whom is intrusted the affairs of government.' The missionaries answered, 'that they had no wish to oppose government, nor to utter any thing inflammatory.' They then explained the circumstance attending the Persian tract, which applied some derogatory epithets to the sublime Mahomet,

* One of the Puranas, or sacred poems of the Hindoos, translated and printed by the missionaries, and sold by Black and Parry, Leadenhall Street.

and acknowledged the inadvertence in suffering it to be printed, before the translation had been properly examined.

The Governor politely admitted the apology, and said that he entertained no unfavourable prejudices against the missionaries; but as such publications might prove injurious, their circulation must not be suffered. They were afterwards allowed to present to the Governor in Council a memorial, which met all the allegations against them in the most inoffensive, respectful, but effectual manner.

The memorial was attended with the desired effect. The order was revoked, the press was allowed to remain at Serampore, and preaching at the Loll Bazar was again resumed. The government, however, required to have the inspection of any new tracts, before they were printed and circulated; and though this was a little mortifying to men of such unquestionable learning and probity, it turned out to their advantage, by giving an implied authority to the circulation of the Scriptures and also of religious tracts issuing from the mission press. The missionaries waited on the Governor, to present their thanks for the revocation of the orders in council, and were handsomely received. The Governor politely acknowledged to the missionaries, 'that nothing more was necessary than a proper explanation of the subject, to place every thing in a clear and favourable light.' The enemies of the mission in India, who had endeavoured to awaken the fears of the government, were thus defeated, and the mission itself was brought more immediately under the protection and patronage of the state.

Mr. Fuller, having made himself acquainted with these particulars, communicated them to a powerful friend in the Directory; made repeated appeals to the public, on behalf of the mission, and relaxed none of his exertions till the machinations of the enemy at home were completely frustrated.

In the month of June, when another Court of Proprietors was to be called, he was found at his post. The meeting, however, passed over without any material occurrence. Only one proprietor appeared in opposition, and he was soon neutralized by some information previously given by the chairman. There did not appear to have been any official communications from the Government in India to the Directors at home; but a number of private letters

excited a strong sensation, not only at the India House, but among some of the members of administration. The President of the Board of Control, even pressed upon the Chairman of the Directory to recal the missionaries. The Chairman, and other powerful friends to religious liberty, made a noble stand on this occasion. One of them in particular, of high rank, and possessing the superior means of information, represented to the government, that the best way of preserving its eastern dominions would be to afford ample protection to the missionaries. These noblemen and gentlemen expressed their intention of resisting the renewal of their charter, if the East India Company should persist in excluding christianity from India. The Bishop of London also felt indignant at such an attempt. The opposition appeared at length to die away, and the indefatigable Secretary of the Baptist Society continued his efforts till another calm succeeded.

Happily relieved from the anxieties which this opposition had excited, Mr. Fuller made his fourth excursion into the north, in the autumn of 1808. His visits to Scotland were always very pleasant to him, and he usually went once in two or three years, after the commencement of the intercourse; but he was now assured that "he might reap more than a triennial harvest, if he would but go and put in his sickle." In no part of the empire were his services more highly esteemed, or rendered more generally useful; and he used to say of the Scottish Christians, that their liberality was unbounded. In the early part of this journey he complained of being much exhausted, having travelled a hundred and fifty miles in three days, and preached every evening on his way. Arrived at Edinburgh, he found his labours greatly multiplied; arrangements were made for preaching, visiting, and collecting, the whole of the week; but he was soon obliged to desist from such engagements. Illness threatened to impede his progress, and called forth the attentions of a medical friend; but he still went forward, and every where met with the utmost kindness. His labours and success during this journey were unexampled, and he himself was surprised to find how God had prospered his way. At Glasgow, he observed, that the interest which religious people took in the mission, together with their expressions of affection and liberality was quite overwhelming; and instead of being weary in well-doing, they pressed the assiduous Secretary to pay his visits a little

oftener. Returning home in November, he says, "I have been enabled to collect as much as two thousand pounds in the course of six weeks, after a journey of twelve hundred miles. God be praised for all his goodness, and for the abundant kindness shown towards me, and towards the mission."

In February and March, 1813, Mr. Fuller renewed his visits to London, to promote the interests of the mission. Accompanied with two other ministers, he obtained an interview with several noblemen, to solicit their influence in making some provisions in the new Charter of the East India Company, for the toleration of Christian missionaries. These applications were followed with petitions to parliament, from the general body of dissenters; and both the government and the legislature did themselves the honour to become the patrons of christianity in India.

In the summer of this year Mr. Fuller paid his fifth and last visit to Scotland, where he was assisted by the arrival of two of his brethren from England. Besides his usual labours, he sometimes preached to a large concourse of people in the open air, in places where the doors of the kirk were closed against him; but though in tolerable health, he was scarcely equal to such exertions. He nevertheless continued his career with unabated ardour, was every where hailed as the agent for the mission and translations in India, and met with good success. The kindness he received at Glasgow "was almost overwhelming," and he took his final leave of Scotland with sentiments of the most grateful affection and esteem.

Up to the last year of his life, his labours were continued with very little intermission. In a letter dated, May 11, 1814, he says, "I have much journeying before me; first, to Olney and Bedford next week; then to the Association at Leicester, in Whitsun-week; then into Essex, on June 6th, where I must be at a missionary meeting, of that county, at Bocking, on June 8th; and collect what I can between that and our London annual meeting, which I suppose is on June 22. I must then return, and be at Kettering by the 26th, which is our Lord's supper day. Then I must set off and be out all July in the north of England:—the first Sabbath at Liverpool, the second at Manchester, third at Leeds, fourth at Newcastle, and fifth at Hull. May the Lord strengthen me for these labours."

In short, the history of Mr. Fuller's life for the last three and twenty years, was so completely identified with that of the mission, that all its principal transactions must be referred to his agency. It was in great measure his own production; he formed and moulded it with exquisite skill, watched over and directed all its movements, and seemed to be present in every place wherever its effects were visible. It grew up with him, and was inwrought into the very elements and constitution of his mind; he seemed to have no thoughts, no cares, but what related to its interests. It may even be doubted, whether, after the commencement of this great undertaking, he wrote a single letter to any of his numerous correspondents, that did not bear some reference to that subject. In serving the mission, he had no idea of sparing himself; but while his health was constantly impaired by the greatness of his exertions, he persevered in them with unabating ardour to the very last. He appears, indeed, to have expected that these labours would cost him his life, but it affected him not; and had it not been for the unusual strength and vigour of his constitution, he would have fallen a sacrifice much sooner than he did. The sentiments which he delivered in his Sermon at Bedford, May 6, 1801, exactly fourteen years before his death, were highly characteristic and premonitory of that event.

"It is not impossible," said he, "that we may live to see things of which at present we have scarcely any conception: but whether we do or not, Jesus lives, and his kingdom must increase. And what, if while we are scaling the walls of the enemy, we should a few of us lose our lives? We must die some way; and can we desire to die in a better cause? Probably many of the Israelites, who went up with Joshua to possess the land, perished in the attempt; yet this was no objection to a perseverance in the cause. In carrying the glad tidings of eternal life to Jews and Gentiles, Stephen and James, with many others, fell sacrifices at an early period: yet no one was discouraged on this account, but rather stimulated to follow the example."

CHAPTER VI.

EXTRACTS FROM HIS DIARY, AND NARRATIVE OF THE DEATH OF HIS CHILD.

The following select extracts, from a very copious diary of Mr. Fuller, to which Mr. Morris had not access, are here inserted to increase the value of the present edition. It has not been thought necessary to preserve the respective dates. Each day's entry is distinguished by commencing with a dash.

"—O that I might feel more of the power of religion, and know more of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge! I think I see divine excellence in such a life. O that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast! I am going, God willing, to visit a friend to-day. O that a spirit of watchfulness, savour, and fellowship with Christ, may attend me!

"—I see what a strait course it is to steer between legality and libertinism. I have been for some time, trying to walk more closely with God; and now I find the sparks of self-righteous pride begin to kindle. I have been thinking to-day of Isaiah ii. 11. I have reason to be humbled for having so little humility: yet I think I have tasted a sweetness in that plan of redemption which stains the pride of all flesh.

"—Have found my heart tenderly affected several times, especially to-night, in prayer respecting my critical situation. Oh! Providence, how intricate! If rough roads are marked out for me, may my shoes be iron and brass! I found, to-day, a peculiar sympathy towards poor people under trying providences; thinking I may have to go that road. 'Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness!'

"—It is good to visit the poor, that we may know their cases, exercise sympathy and charity towards them, and learn gratitude, and many a lesson in the doctrine of providence. O what a horrid depth of pride and hypocrisy do I find in my heart! Surely I am unfit for any company. If I am with a *superior*, how will my heart court his praise, by speaking diminutively of myself, not forgetting to urge the disadvantages under which I have laboured to excuse my inferiority; and here is a large vacancy left, in hope he

he will fill it up with something like this—'Well, you must have made good improvement of what advantages you have enjoyed.' On the other hand, when in company with an *inferior*, how full of self am I! While I seem to be instructing him by communicating my observations, how prone to lose sight of *his* edification, and every thing but my own self-importance; aiming more to discover my own knowledge, than to increase his!

"While I make these observations, I feel the truth of them. A thought has been suggested to write them, not as having been working in my heart to-day, but only as *discovered* to-day. Oh horridly deceitful and desperately wicked heart! Surely I have little else in my religious exercises but these workings. I am afraid of being deceived at last. If I am saved, what must the Son of God have endured!

"—I had an affecting time to-night, in going a road, where, about twelve or thirteen years ago, I had many a season of sorrow and joy. O *here* I saw myself lost, *there* I had a sight of the Saviour; *here* I went bowed down with fear and despair, *there* I was sweetly cheered with a view of the faithfulness of God; in *this* place I mourned my desolate state, in *that* the state of the church lay heavily upon me; *yonder* my hopes respecting the church were excited, by thinking of Psa. cxxii. 1, 2, 8, 9. O what strange events since! by the help of God I have continued to this day. When my soul is cast down within me, may I 'remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites from the hill Mizar.'

"—Surely I do not sufficiently study the cases of the people, in my preaching! I find, by conversation to-day, with one seemingly in dying circumstances, that but little of my preaching has been suited to her case. Visiting the sick, and conversing sometimes even with the unconverted part of my hearers, about their souls, and especially with the godly, would have a tendency to make my preaching more experimental.

"—Religion appeared to me to be full of *greatness*. A *great* God, possessed of *great* excellencies, whence arise *great* obligations; hence the *great* evil of sin; and hence the need of a Saviour, and a *great* one. All in religion is *great*. O that I had a *great* sense of the importance of divine things! Lord, increase my faith!

"—Thought, to-day, on account of family circumstances, what a matter of importance is the birth of a child. Here

its life begins, but where shall it end? Ah! no end to its existence! But, O that God would accept of my new-born child, and let its end be 'to glorify God, and enjoy him forever.'

"—Thought what an awful day will that be, when God searches Jerusalem, as with candles! O how many will then appear to have been religious through custom, shame, pride, or something short of the fear of God! Alas! how many have proved hypocrites, by the breaking up of a church! When the restraints of church communion have been taken off them, how have they turned out! O to walk as in the sight of God! That is a spirit which would teach us to be holy, though there were no creature upon earth to watch us.

"—Observed our proneness to think of ourselves as others speak of us. For example, if I am praised at any particular place as a preacher, how prone am I, at that place, to keep pace with their esteem, if not to outgo it, in the estimation of myself! On the other hand, at such places where I have felt myself embarrassed, how prone to despair and so to take no delight in the work! O how much of self have I in me! how far from that excellent character, of being dead to the smiles and frowns of men!

"—I think I have never yet entered into the true idea of the work of the ministry. If I had, surely I should be like Aaron, running between the dead and the living. I think I am in the ministry, as I was in my life as a Christian, before I read *Edwards on the Affections*. I had never entered into the spirit of a great many important things. O for some such penetrating, edifying writer on this subject! or, O rather that the Holy Spirit would open my eyes, and let me see into the things that I have never yet seen!

"—A pulpit seems an awful place. An opportunity for addressing a company of immortals on their eternal interests—O how important! We preach for eternity. We, in a sense are set for the rising and falling of many in Israel. And our own rise or fall is equally therein involved.

"—I think, when we are in company and address ourselves to any one in particular, it too often happens, that the applause of the company, rather than the edification of the person or ourselves, is the object. Hence, witticisms, and such sayings as sting the party addressed, are introduced. Pride, how pernicious!

"— This afternoon, being on a visit, as I stepped aside from the company, I overheard one of them saying, 'I love Mr. Fuller's company, it is so *diverting!* This expression moved me much. O wretch that I am! Is this to have my speech seasoned with grace? O Lord, forgive me! some humbling thoughts to-night, for the above, in prayer.

"— I found my soul drawn out in love to poor souls, while reading Millar's account of Elliot's labours among the North American Indians, and their effect on those poor barbarous savages. I found also a suspicion, that we shackle ourselves too much in our addresses to sinners; that we have bewildered and lost ourselves, by taking the decrees of God as rules of action. Surely Peter and Paul never felt such scruples in their addresses as we do. They addressed their hearers as *men*—fallen men; as we should warn and admonish persons who were blind, and on the brink of some dreadful precipice. Their work seemed plain before them. O that mine might be so before me!

"— How apt are we to think ourselves rather pitiable than blameable, for having such remains of corruption in us! Perhaps one cause of this may be our viewing sin in us as an *army*, or something we have to *oppose* and *press through*. These ideas are good, provided we remember, that they are *figurative*, and that this army is nothing *external*, but *internal;* and that the opposition is not like that wherein the combatant's inclination is all one way, but he finds himself wholly overcome, against his will; were this the case, we should be wholly *pitiable*. But it is as if a debtor, were going to pay his creditor; but, by the way, found great struggles, whether he should go forward, and behave like an honest man, or whether he should turn aside, and spend his money in riot and luxury. In this case, he certainly ought to have had no struggle, nor to have made a moment's scruple. Neither ought we to make a moment's scruple about loving the Lord with all our hearts, and refraining wholly from sinning against him. We may, indeed, be pitiable with respect to each other; but, in the sight of God, we are wholly blameable.

"— My mind to-day seems bewildered. The lives of some poets have taken up my thoughts. The grandeur and stretch of thought in their writings seems rather to flatten my mind towards the simple truths of Christianity. But, alas! what am I after? what am I admiring? Pompous trifles! Great souls employed in dressing atoms! O religion!

thy joys are substantial and sincere! When shall I awake, and find myself where nothing else shall attract the soul?

"— I find it is observed, that persons in my condition, without greater advantages as to learning, are generally apt to be more censorious than those whose learning is far greater. I wish I may be always on the watch here.

"— This evening, I felt tender all the time of the prayer meeting for the revival of religion; but in hearing Mr. Beeby Wallis pray for me, I was overcome; his having a better opinion of me than I deserve, cuts me to the heart! Went to prayer myself, and found my mind engaged more than ordinarily in praying for the revival of religion. I had felt many sceptical thoughts; as though there were room to ask—What profit shall I have if I pray to God? for which I was much grieved. Find a great satisfaction in these monthly meetings, even supposing our requests should not be granted, yet prayer to God is its own reward. Felt many bitter reflections for my stupid, carnal way of living.

"— Impressed, this morning, in thinking on the wants of the people, how they would probably be coming from many places round, in quest of spiritual food, while I was barren, and scarcely knew what to say to them. Affected in thinking of Micah vii. 'Feed thy people with thy rod,' &c. Preached from it this morning with some freedom.

"— We had a Ministers' Meeting, at Northampton. The best part of the day was, I think, in conversation. A question was discussed, to the following purport: *To what causes, in ministers, may much of their want of success be imputed?* The answer turned chiefly upon the want of personal religion; particularly, the neglect of close dealing with God in *closet prayer*. Jer. x. 21, was referred to: 'Their pastors are become brutish, and have not *sought* the Lord; therefore they shall not prosper, and their flocks shall be scattered.' Another reason assigned was, the want of reading and studying the Scriptures more *as Christians*, for the edification of our own souls. We are too apt to study them, merely to find out something *to say to others*, without living upon the truth ourselves. If we eat not the book before we deliver its contents to others, we may expect the Holy Spirit will not much accompany us. If we study the Scriptures as Christians, the more familiar we are with them, the more we shall feel their importance; but, if otherwise, our familiarity with the word will be like that of soldiers, doctors or, grave-diggers, with death—it

will wear away all sense of its importance from our minds. To enforce this sentiment, Prov. xxii. 17, 18, was referred to: 'Apply thine *heart* unto knowledge—the words of the wise will be pleasant, if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.' To this might be added, Psl. i. 2, 3. Another reason was, our want of being emptied of *self-sufficiency*. In proportion as we lean upon our own gifts, or parts, or preparations, we slight the Holy Spirit; and no wonder that, being grieved, he should leave us to do our work alone. Besides, when this is the case, it is, humanly speaking, *unsafe* for God to prosper us, especially those ministers who possess considerable abilities. Reference was also made to an Ordination Sermon, lately preached, by Mr. Booth, of London, to Mr. Hopkins, Dr. Gifford's successor, from 'Take heed to thyself.' O that I may remember these hints for my good!

"—For these last three weeks I have too much again relapsed into a kind of thoughtlessness. I have felt a little in preaching, but not much. One day, I was looking over Dr. Owen on the Mortification of Sin. Speaking of the evil of sin in the soul unmortified, he says,—'It will take away a man's usefulness in his generation. His works, his endeavours, his labours, seldom receive a blessing from God. If he be a preacher, God commonly blows upon his ministry, so that he shall labour in the fire, and not be honoured with success. This, in a great degree, is realized in me.

"—Some weeks ago I thought I felt myself to gain ground by closet prayer; but I have lately relapsed again too much into indifference. Yesterday I read Jonathan Edwards's two Sermons, *On the importance of a thorough knowledge of divine truth*, from Heb. v. 12. I felt this effect—a desire to rise earlier, to read more, and to make the discovery of truth more a business. This morning I have read another of his sermons, on *God, the Christian's portion*, from Psl. lxxiii. 25. The latter part comes very close, and I feel myself at a loss what to judge as to God's being my chief good. He asks, whether we had rather live in this world rich, and without God, or poor, and with him? Perhaps I should not be so much at a loss to decide this question as another; namely, Had I rather be rich in this world, and enjoy but *little* of God; or poor, and enjoy *much* of God? I am confident the practice of great numbers of professing Christians declares, that they pre-

fer the former; and in some instances I feel guilty of the same thing.

"— Within the last two years I have experienced perhaps, as much peace and calmness of mind, as at any former period. I have been enabled to walk somewhat more near to God than heretofore; and I find that there is nothing that affords such a preservative against sin. 'If we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' This passage has been of great use to me, ever since I preached from it, which was on June 3, 1792. The idea on which I then principally insisted was, that *sin is to be overcome, not so much by a direct or mere resistance of it, as by opposing other principles and considerations to it.* This sentiment has been abundantly verified in my experience: so far as I have walked in the Spirit, so far has my life been holy and happy; and I have experienced a good degree of these blessings, compared with former times, though but a very small degree, compared with what I ought to aspire after."

The following narrative of the loss of his first daughter, Sarah, who died May 30, 1786, aged 6 years and nearly 6 months; was drawn up by her afflicted father, and strikingly evinces his piety and parental tenderness. It is inserted nearly entire, from Ryland's Life of Fuller.

"Sarah Fuller was born at Soham, Dec. 7, 1779. At the time of her birth, I committed her to God, as I trust, I have done many times since. Once in particular, viewing her as she lay smiling in the cradle, at the age of eight months, my heart was much affected: I took her up in my arms, retired, and in that position, wrestled hard with God for a blessing; at the same time, offering her up, as it were, and solemnly presenting her to the Lord for acceptance. In this exercise I was greatly encouraged by the conduct of Christ towards those who brought little children in their arms to him, for his blessing.

"I have frequently, when carrying her in my arms, sung over her such lines as the following, with much affection:

'May'st thou live to know and fear him,
Trust and love him all thy days:
Then go dwell forever near him,
See his face, and sing his praise.'

"Or this:

'O may'st thou live to reach the place
Where he unveils his lovely face;
There all his glories to behold,
And sing his name to harps of gold.'

"She was a child of great vivacity of spirits; but nothing remarkably vicious. The only time in her life that I had any occasion to use a rod, was when she was about four years old, for telling a lie. Having, one day, a great inclination to go out, she asked leave, and then said she had obtained it, when she had not.

"About Michaelmas, 1785, she was invited, by our kind friends Mr. and Mrs. Ryland, and Miss Tyler, to pay a visit to Northampton. She went, and stayed eleven or twelve weeks: during which time, Mrs. Trinder kindly took her into her school. Her proficiency in reading, spelling, &c. gave us much pleasure. But, alas for us! how long will it be, ere we cease to set our eyes upon that which is not! Death was then preparing to blast our rising hopes!

"About December she was taken ill, at Northampton: our friends thought her illness to be the measles. After a while, she seemed to get better, and on the 16th of December I brought her home. From the time of her return, we perceived a remarkable seriousness in her, with an uncommon delight in reading, and in our apprehension, her faculties ripened much beyond her years. But still her illness hung about her. In the beginning of February, she had the measles of a certainty; and we hoped she would have recovered her health after the turn of the disorder; but, from that time, she grew weaker and weaker, and her complaints grew more and more alarming. A hectic fever preyed upon her perpetually. At this time, however, she took great delight in reading accounts of the conversion of little children, and seemed to love those children for their godliness. She would read these narratives aloud, when she was obliged to pause at every few words to get breath, till indeed we were obliged to restrain her, lest it should overcome her. At the same time, she discovered great tenderness of conscience, in respect of speaking the truth, and keeping holy the Lord's day. She would chide her brother Robert, if he discovered any inclination to play on that day.

"In March, I took her to Northampton, for the advice of Dr. Kerr. This cheered her spirits; as she loved Mr. and Mrs. Ryland, and wanted to go and see them. She

stayed there a fortnight, and her aunt with her. The doctor was very attentive and kind to her, and we still hoped she might recover. During this fortnight, I went two or three times to see her; and one evening, being with her alone, she asked me to pray for her. 'What do you wish me to pray for, my dear?' said I. She answered, 'That God would bless me, and keep me, and save my soul.' 'Do you think then, that you are a sinner?' 'Yes, father.' Fearing lest she did not understand what she said, I asked her, 'What is sin, my dear?' She answered, 'Telling a story.' I comprehended this, and it went to my heart. 'What then,' I said, 'you remember, do you, my having corrected you once, for telling a story?' 'Yes, father.' 'And are you grieved for having so offended God?' 'Yes, father.' I asked her, if she did not try to pray herself. She answered, 'I sometimes try, but I do not know how to pray; I wish you would pray for me, till I can pray for myself.' As I continued to sit by her, she appeared much dejected. I asked her the reason. She said, 'I am afraid I should go to hell.' 'My dear,' said I, 'who told you so?' 'Nobody, (said she,) but I know if I do not pray to the Lord, I must go to hell.' I then went to prayer with her, with many tears.

"After her return to Kettering, we soon saw, with heart-rending grief, evident symptoms of approaching dissolution. Her mind seemed to grow, however, in seriousness. She had some verses composed for her, by our dear friend Mr. Ryland.* These, when we rode out for the air, she often

* Lord, teach a little child to pray,
Thy grace betimes impart,
And grant thy Holy Spirit may
Renew my infant heart.

A helpless creature I was born,
And from the womb I stray'd;
I must be wretched and forlorn,
Without thy mercy's aid.

But Christ can all my sins forgive,
And wash away their stain,
And fit my soul with him to live,
And in his kingdom reign.

To him let little children come,
For he hath said they may;
His bosom then shall be their home,
Their tears he'll wipe away.

For all who early seek his face.
Shall surely taste his love,
Jesus will guide them by his grace,
To dwell with him above.

requested me to say over to her. She several times requested me to pray with her. I asked her again if she tried to pray herself: I found by her answer that she did, and was used to pray over the hymn which Mr. Ryland composed for her. I used to carry her in my arms, into the fields, and there talk with her upon the desirableness of dying and being with Christ, and with holy men and women, and with those holy children, who cried, 'Hosanna to the Son of David.' Thus I tried to reconcile her, and myself with her, to death, without directly telling her she would soon die. One day, as she lay in bed, I read to her the last eight verses of Rev. vii. 'They shall hunger no more, nor thirst,' &c. I said nothing upon it, but wished to observe what effect the passage might have upon her; I should not have wondered if she had been a little cheered by it. She said nothing, however; but looked very dejected. I said, 'My dear, you are unhappy.' She was silent. I urged her to tell me what was the matter. Still she was silent. I then asked her, whether she was afraid she should not go to that blessed world of which I had been reading. She answered, 'Yes.' 'But what makes you afraid, my dear?' 'Because, (said she, with a tone of grief that pierced me to the heart,) I have sinned against the Lord.' 'True, my dear, (said I,) you have sinned against the Lord; but the Lord is more ready to forgive you, if you are grieved for offending him, than I can be to forgive you, when you are grieved for offending me; and you know how ready I am to do that.' I then told her of the great grace of God, and the love of Christ to sinners. I told her of his mercy in forgiving a poor wicked thief, who when he was dying, prayed to him to save his soul. At this she seemed cheered, but said nothing.

"A few weeks before she died, she asked her aunt to read to her. 'What shall I read, my dear?' said her aunt. 'Read,' said she, 'some book about Christ.' Her aunt read part of the 21st chapter of Matthew, concerning the children who shouted 'Hosanna to the Son of David.' As her death drew nigh, I was exceedingly affected, and very earnest in prayer for her soul, having now no hope of her life. I used frequently to anticipate her death, when I could think of nothing but the language of Reuben—'The child is not: and I, whither shall I go!' I thought at that time, if any thing were said at her funeral, it must be from some such passage as this. In short, I am sure I was affected to excess, and in a way that I ought not to have been, and, I believe, should

not have been, if I had loved God better. About this time I threw myself prostrate on the floor, and wept exceedingly, yet pleading with God for her. The agony of my spirit produced a most violent bilious complaint, which laid me quite aside for several days. I then reflected that I had sinned, in being so inordinately anxious. From this time I felt a degree of calmness and resignation to God. On the morning of the 30th of May, I heard a whispering in an adjoining room. I suspected the cause, and upon inquiry found that the child had expired about six o'clock, with a slight convulsive motion, without a sigh or a groan. I called the family to me, and, as well as I was able, attempted to bless a taking as well as a giving God; and to implore that those of us who were left behind, might find grace in the wilderness. The words of the Shunamite were at that time much to me—'It is well.' These words were preached from at her funeral, by Mr. Ryland. My affliction had prevented my seeing her the last few days of her life; but I just went and took leave of her body, before the coffin was fastened down; though that was almost too much for me in my weak and afflicted state. She was very patient under her afflictions, scarcely ever complaining, even when her bones penetrated through her skin. If ever we were obliged to force her medicines upon her, though she would cry a little at the moment, yet she would quickly leave off, and kiss us, saying, 'I love you, I love you all; I love you for making me take my medicines, for I know you do it for my good.' Her constitution was always rather delicate, her temper amiable, and her behaviour engaging.

"Surely, it will now be our concern to flee from idolatry, and to hold all created comfort with a loose hand; remembering the counsel of the apostle—'The time is short: it remaineth, that those who have wives be as though they had none; and those that weep, as though they wept not; and those that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world [or, this world, which is but a figure, fashion, or form, without substance—] passeth away.'"

The following extract of a letter from Mrs. Fuller to the Rev. Dr. Ryland, will sufficiently explain what to many might appear inconsistent with his true character.

"I cannot forbear adding my testimony to my late dear husband's conduct in his domestic character; which, so far as his mind was at liberty to indulge in such enjoy-

ments, I must testify to have been, ever since I had the happiness of being united to him, of the most amiable and endearing kind. But to so great a degree was he absorbed in his work, as scarcely to allow himself any leisure, or relaxation from the severest application; especially, since of late years, his work so accumulated on his hands. I was sometimes used to remark, how much we were occupied; (for, indeed, I had no small share of care devolved upon me, in consequence;) his reply usually was, 'Ah, my dear, the way for us to have any joy, is to rejoice in all our labour, and then we shall have plenty of joy.' If I complained, that he allowed himself no time for recreation, he would answer, 'O no; all my recreation is a change of work.' If I expressed an apprehension that he would soon wear himself out, he would reply, 'I cannot be worn out in a better cause. We must work while it is day;' or, 'Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.'

"There was a degree of bluntness in his manner; which yet did not arise from an unsociable or churlish disposition, but from an impatience of interruption in the grand object of his pursuit. In this sense, he seemed not to know his relations or nearest friends. Often, when a friend or an acquaintance, on a journey, has called, when they had exchanged a few words, he would ask, 'Have you any thing more to say? (or something to that effect;) if not, I must beg to be excused;' at the same time asking them to stay, and take some refreshment, if they chose. Yet, you know, dear Sir, he had a heart formed for the warmest and sincerest friendship, with those whose minds were congenial with his own, and who were engaged in similar pursuits; and I never knew him to be weary of their company. I am fully persuaded, that my dear husband fell a sacrifice to his unremitting application to the concerns of the Mission; but I dare not murmur. The Lord has done as it pleased him; and I know that whatever he does is right."

CHAPTER VII.

Review of Mr. Fuller's Doctrinal and Practical Writings—Sermon on walking by Faith—Ordination Sermon at Thorne—Funeral Sermon for Mr. B. Wallis—Association Sermon at St. Albans—Collection Sermon at Edinburgh—Memoirs of the Rev. S. Pearce—Sermon at the Bedford Union—the Backslider—Ordination Sermon at Birmingham—Remarks on Church Discipline—Sermon on Christian Patriotism—Vindication of Protestant Dissent—The great Question answered—Discourses on the Book of Genesis—Sermon on the pernicious Influence of Delay.

The universal interest and importance attached to religious subjects have called into existence a greater number of writers in this department than in almost any other, and therefore might naturally be expected to furnish a larger proportion of an inferior description. To write on other subjects, learning, genius, taste, or science of some sort, is generally thought requisite; but on theological theses, piety alone is too often deemed a sufficient qualification. Here also every man who becomes the leader of a party, however insignificant; or the abettor of a creed, however inconsistent or absurd, thinks himself called upon at some time or other to appear as an advocate, if he can but manage to hold a pen; besides innumerable others, who from less suspicious motives, and with much better pretensions, are induced to offer themselves to public notice.

Amidst such a crowd of disputants, theologians and retailers of divinity, a writer of real merit would not easily be distinguished; and for such a writer as Mr. Fuller, especially, more than ordinary ability would be demanded. For though he possessed a deep and penetrating judgment, and a mind capable of a mighty grasp, there was a certain negligence and coarseness in his style, a grotesque familiarity and quaintness of expression, especially in his earlier publications, which was far from being inviting even to readers of moderate taste. There was also an inflexibility in his religious system which could never coalesce with any other, or adapt itself to the size and dimension of human prejudices. With him all was inexorable truth and justice; he had no idea whatever of religious accommodation, and but cautiously admitted even that of forbearance.

Buttoned up and laced in a plain puritanic garb, he makes his appearance as an Author, and is soon recognized as one of former times; as a man who lived with Owen,

thought with Bunyan, and wrote with the pointed pen of Baxter. His earlier performances met with a cordial reception from the general class of serious and devotional readers, who preferred plain solid truth to the ornaments of style, and the wholesome words of sound doctrine to the soothing language of a deceitful and worldly religion. With readers of this description, the works of this able and faithful writer will long be held in deserved estimation.

The present chapter is devoted entirely to the Doctrinal and Practical writings of Mr. Fuller; those on Controversial subjects being reserved for another section. Without regard to size or merit, these are placed as nearly as possible in the order in which they were written, and accompanied with brief notices of their contents, for the information of those who have not had the opportunity of consulting his various works, a new edition of which has lately been completed in eight volumes octavo. In giving an opinion of their respective merits, the author could do no other than follow his own judgment; and this he offers with becoming deference to the decision of the reader.

The Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith; A Sermon delivered at Nottingham, June 2, 1784.

This was Mr. Fuller's first appearance in print, and there is in this performance much sound thinking, on a subject which was afterwards to form the basis of a lengthened controversy; but in this Sermon the points of discussion are wholly restricted to practical and experimental purposes, and with a view of ascertaining the nature, as well as promoting the designs of true religion.

In the introductory part of this discourse, the preacher confutes several erroneous sentiments on the subject of believing, and exposes that delusive confidence which is too often substantial in its stead.

"All true faith," he observes, "must have truth for its foundation; and if faith is the belief of the truth, then whatever I believe ought to be a truth, and a truth supported by evidence, prior to and independent of my believing it. This is certainly the case respecting the excellency and all-sufficiency of Christ. He is what he is, whether I believe it or not. However I may disallow of him, he is chosen of God and precious. Whatever real excellence I may at any time discern or believe to be in him, I only believe the truth, and what would have been the truth if I had never believed it. Faith therefore draws aside the veil, and discovers things in some measure as they are. So, if the persuasion I have of my interest in Christ, have any right to the name of faith, it must be a truth, and a truth capable of being proved by scriptural evidence at the time."

This discourse also contains some interesting remarks on the nature of direct applications to Christ; on the best means of obtaining satisfactory evidence of an interest in him; and on the use to be made of past experience.

Mr. Fuller then considers 'walking by faith,' as denoting religious progression, under the influence of those invisible objects, of the reality of which we have no evidence but from the testimony of God. This is first opposed to the idea of walking by corporeal sight, and illustrated in the case of Noah and Abraham; it is afterwards distinguished from the discoveries of unassisted reason, whose province in matters of religion is clearly defined; and from ultimate vision, where faith in full fruition dies.

After a careful exposition of terms, the subject is more fully illustrated, by its application to various periods of the christian life; such as—those dark seasons in providence, when we can perceive no way of escape, nor find any source of comfort, but what arises from the divine testimony—those approaches to Christ, and that fellowship with him, which depend on the record that God hath given of his Son—the numerous sacrifices we are required to make of present enjoyments, where we have no prospect of future recompense, but what is set before us in the gospel—the various low and distressing seasons to which the church of Christ is subject, in which there is scarcely any ground of encouragement, but what is revealed in the promises—the hope of a better state, which is founded solely on the testimony of God. In each of these the Christian is required to live and 'walk by faith,' and not by sight.

The importance of such a life is represented as consisting in its tendency to glorify God—to advance the good of man—and heighten the bliss and glory of the world to come.

The "Persuasives to a General Union in extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion," appended to this Sermon, have been noticed in a former part of these Memoirs. See Chap. iv.

The Qualifications and Encouragement of a faithful Minister: An Ordination Sermon, delivered at Thorne, Bedfordshire, Oct. 31, 1787.

From the fear of assuming too much, or of undertaking a work of supererogation, that which here forms the leading theme of discussion, and which of all others is of the

greatest importance, is but sparingly introduced into the generality of ordination sermons; on which account, they possess but little comparative interest.

In the discourse before us, the man of God is portrayed in lively colours, as forming the only proper character for the christian ministry, and a large portion of personal religion is with infinite propriety inculcated as constituting the most essential qualification for the pastoral office.

Taking for an example, Barnabas, who was 'a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith,' the preacher insists on the necessity of piety in domestic life, in the duties of retirement, in the exercises of public worship, and in general behaviour, as indispensable in the character of 'a good man,' and a faithful minister. Next to this, the cherishing of spiritual affections, being 'full of the Holy Ghost,' or abounding in the fruits of the Spirit, is shown to be the best preparative for the duties of the sacred office; for imbibing the genuine doctrines of the gospel, giving a savour to the ministry of the word, preserving a consistency between precept and example, disposing the mind to a spiritual and edifying conversation, and regulating every part of the exterior deportment. The necessity of being also 'full of faith,' having the mind deeply imbued with religious sentiment, being fully persuaded of the truth of what is proposed to others, and of living upon that truth, is enforced with considerable energy.

The connection between piety and usefulness is well accounted for; and on this part of the subject, which is intended to afford encouragement to the faithful discharge of the ministerial office, several important remarks are exhibited towards the close of the address, which deserve the serious attention of all who are engaged in testifying the gospel of the grace of God. Eminent spirituality, rather than talents, is shown to have the greatest influence on ministerial success.

"In almost all the great works which God hath wrought in any period of time, he has honoured men of this character, by making them his instruments. In the midst of a sore calamity upon the murmuring Israelites, when God was inclined to show mercy, it was by means of his servant Aaron, running with a censer of fire in his hand, and standing between the living and the dead. The great reformation that was brought about in the days of Hezekiah, was by the instrumentality of a man, who 'wrought that which was good and right, and true, before the Lord his God, and then it follows—'And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law,

and in the commandments, to seek his God, *he did it with all his heart, and prospered.*'*

"There was another great reformation in the Jewish church, about the time of their return from Babylon. One of the chief instruments in this work was Ezra, 'a ready scribe in the law of his God;' a man who had 'prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments;' a man who 'fasted and prayed at the river Ahava,' previous to his great undertaking; a man who was afterwards 'sorely astonished, and in heaviness, and would eat no meat, nor drink water, but fell upon his knees, and spread out his hands unto the Lord his God, on account of the transgression of the people.'† Another great instrument in this work was Nehemiah, a man that wholly devoted himself to the service of God and his people, labouring night and day; a man who was not to be seduced by the intrigues of God's adversaries, nor intimidated by their threatenings: but who persevered in his work till it was finished, closing his labours with this solemn prayer and appeal: 'Think upon me, oh my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.'‡

"Barnabas also was 'a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith; *and much people was added to the Lord.*'§

The blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord: A Sermon delivered at the funeral of Mr. Beeby Wallis. 1792.

The preaching and publishing of funeral sermons is a practice so very common, and the praise bestowed on the pious dead has generally been so indiscriminate, that men of reflecting minds have been led to suspect whether these orations be not the effect of religious complaisance, rather than of wisdom and fidelity; and whether by reducing the standard of moral excellence so as to give to the generality of modern christians a kind of gigantic stature, or a high degree of commendation for the most ordinary virtues, be not adapted to injure rather than promote the interests of true religion.

Mr. Fuller seemed aware of this objection; he, therefore, states and obviates it in a manner that sufficiently justified his own procedure. His words are: "I have commonly declined saying much of deceased friends, and still think, that, generally speaking, it is right to do so, because the generality of characters, even of good men, have nothing in them very remarkable, or worthy of being held up for our imitation. But for this very reason, I think, in *some* cases, it would be wrong to omit it. Perhaps no human writings have had a better effect, than the *Lives* of eminently holy

* 2 Chron. xxxi. 20, 21. † Ezra vii. 10. viii. 10. ix. 5. x. 6.
‡ Nehemiah, chap. iii—vi. § Acts xi. 24.

men. When, therefore, any such characters appear among us, I think it is right to collect as much as we can, the remembrance of which may be of general use" And certainly, the little that is here said of the good man whose funeral solemnities occasioned this apology, was fully demanded by the eminence of his character.

One thing is noticed of him in this discourse, which Mr. Fuller frequently repeated in conversation with peculiar pleasure, as affording singular evidence of that sincerity and uprightness which had marked his general conduct, and it is worthy of being recorded for general instruction. About a week before Mr. Wallis died, he requested a few Christian friends to visit him, and to pray with him.

"Five of us went to see him," says Mr. Fuller. "When there, he told us that he did not wish us to pray for his life; he considered it as the will of God that he should die; and added, 'his will be done!' 'But pray,' said he, 'that if there be any sins of which I have been guilty, and have not yet repented; any sins for which God hath any controversy with me, that he would give me a proper sense of them before I die; or if not, that I might enjoy the light of his countenance in death.' We were all exceedingly affected. After praying with him for about an hour, he gathered up what little strength he had, and addressed himself to us with a kind of solemn farewell."

The Sermon itself, founded on Rev. xiv. 13, is far from being one of Mr. Fuller's best, and will scarcely bear a comparison with his later productions. It is plain and serious, very well adapted to the occasion; but possesses very little pathos, or originality of thought.

The Importance of a deep and intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth: A Sermon delivered at an Association of Baptist Ministers and Churches, at St. Albans, June 1, 1796.

This masterly discourse is founded on the Apostle's reproof of those professors, who, when for the time they ought to be teachers, have need that one teach them again what are the first principles of the oracles of God. Heb. v. 12—14.

For the better elucidation of his text, the preacher observes, that it supposes all divine knowledge to be derived from the oracles of God; that they include a complete system of divine truth; and that believers should not be satisfied with the attainment of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, which require little or no investigation in order to their being understood, but search into the mean-

ing of those deep things of God, which lie beyond the reach of superficial observation.

He then deduces, as the leading sentiment of the passage, "The importance of a deep and intimate knowledge of divine truth;" previously inquiring wherein it consists. Here he introduces a necessary caution to persons, in the present imperfect state, to beware how they presumptuously attempt to explore such subjects as are in their own nature 'unsearchable,' and which the highest order of intelligences are described as 'desiring to look into,' with the deepest reverence and awe. He neither uses the terms absolutely, to express the real conformity of our ideas to the full extent of the things themselves; nor comparatively, as respecting saints on earth and saints in heaven; but merely in reference to the degrees of knowledge among good men in this life; the acquirements of some, being so superficial, that others, compared with them, may be said to have a deep and intimate acquaintance with divine truth.

To attain this, though we are not to stop at first principles, we must be well grounded in them, since in religion, as in every other science, they are the foundation on which the whole structure rests.—We are not to content ourselves with knowing what is truth, but must acquaint ourselves with its evidence, and trace its wisdom and harmony; for nothing tends more to establish the mind, and interest the heart in it, than a preception of its being adapted at once to display the glory of the divine character, and meet the necessities of guilty man. We are to learn it immediately from the oracles of God, and not to be content with seeing it in the light in which some great and good men place it; for though their writings and preaching are not to be despised, they must not be considered as oracular. We must view it in its various connections, in the great system of redemption, and not renounce the study of systematical divinity because it has of late years been derided; since to be without system is nearly the same thing as to be without principle; for even principles, while they continue in a disorganized state, will answer no valuable purpose in the religious life.

Having considered the means of attaining the knowledge which he recommends, he powerfully evinces its *importance*, by showing that a neglect of God's word is represented as a heinous sin; that the word itself is a means of sanctification, and the great source of Christian enjoyment, but that no effect of this kind can be produced any

farther than the truth itself is imbibed; that as a principal object in the religious life is to diffuse the gospel around us, according to our capacities and opportunities, we cannot discharge our duties as parents, masters, and neighbours, to our children or servants, the church or the world, unless we ourselves acquire the knowledge we are bound to communicate; that the pernicious doctrines propagated by some, the infidelity avowed by others, and the apostasy of many from the truth, render a deep acquaintance with the Scriptures necessary, if we would stand fast in the faith, and be the means of preserving others from falling, especially the rising generation, for whose souls, in this age of peculiar trial, we ought to express the most benevolent concern.

The Christian Doctrine of Rewards: A Sermon delivered at the Circus, Edinburgh, on Lord's day evening, Oct. 13, 1799. Published by Request.

This Sermon is justly entitled to rank among the ablest productions of Mr. Fuller's pen. The text is Gal. vi. 7, 8.

"Perhaps there is nothing," says our author, "to which depraved creatures are more addicted, though nothing be more dangerous, than *self deception.* It is from this predilection in favour of some thing that shall prophesy good concerning them, that the truth is disrelished, and those doctrines and systems of religion which flatter their pride and cherish their security, are so eagerly imbibed. The human heart loves to be soothed. The pleasing sounds of *peace, peace,* though there be no peace, will be gratefully received. But let us not be our own enemies. To impose upon ourselves is all that we can do: *God is not mocked.* When all is said and done, *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*"

Adverting to various refuges of lies, to which the unbelieving and impenitent repair, he particularizes some of the most prevalent. Some men venture to hope that *there is no hereafter,* no harvest to follow; or that though they sow to the flesh, yet that they shall not of the flesh reap corruption. Others admit a future state, yet hope to escape the just reward of their evil deeds, from an idea of *the general mercy of God,*—while a third class, as in popish countries, derive a hope from the performance of certain superstitious rites, or *the bestowment of a portion of their wealth on some religious object.* The preacher sifts each of these pleas to the bottom, exposes their vanity, and in reference to the last of them, thus strikingly addresses his hearers:—

"We shall have a collection this evening for the printing of the New Testament in the Bengalee language. If I only wished for your money, I might say, Give, whatever be your motive! No, I am not so concerned for the salvation of the heathen as to be regardless of that of my own countrymen! I ask not a penny from such a motive; and moreover, I solemnly warn you that if you give all your substance in this way, it will avail you nothing. *Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*"

The preacher then lays down the following position, as comprising the doctrine of his text, namely, "That all which is done in this life is preparatory to another; or that the sorrows and joys of a future world bear a similar relation to what is wrought in this, as the harvest bears to the seed sown." This general doctrine he then proceeds to illustrate at large, beginning with the subject of *sowing to the flesh*, and marking the relation which the future punishment of the wicked will bear to it.

"Corruption," says he, "does not consist in the destruction of being, but of well-being: in the blasting of peace, joy, and hope; and, consequently, in the enduring of tribulation, anguish, and everlasting despair. This dreadful harvest will originate in the sin which has been committed in the present life. Even here we see enough of its destructive tendency. We see intemperance followed with disease; idleness with rags; pride with scorn; and indifference to evangelic truth with *the belief of a lie*. We see nations desolated by wars, neighbourhoods and families rendered miserable by contentions, and the minds of individuals sinking under the various loads of guilt, remorse, and despair. Great is the misery of man upon him; yet this is but the *blade* proceeding from this deadly seed; or, at most, the *ear:* the *full corn in the ear* is reserved for another state."

Mr. Fuller remarks, that future misery will greatly consist in reflection. Abraham said to the rich man, *Son, remember!* If the memory could be obliterated, a great part of the torments of hell would be extinguished. But it must remain; and he instances four things in particular, pertaining to sin, which will continue to be the objects of reflection, and consequently prove the source of future misery. These are—the character of the Being against whom it has been committed—the folly of it—the aggravating circumstances attending it—and its effects on others with whom we have been connected. Under the third of these particulars he justly observes, that the same actions committed under different circumstances possess very different degrees of guilt. The heathens in pursuing their immoralities are without excuse; but those who are guilty of the same things amidst the blaze of gospel light are much more so.

Having illustrated the consequences of sowing to the flesh, Mr. Fuller next offers some remarks on *sowing to the Spirit*, in which he points out the relation that subsists between what is done for Christ in this life, and in the joys of the life to come. With great propriety, however, he guards his hearers against supposing, that the connection which exists between sowing to the Spirit, and reaping everlasting life, is of the nature of *due desert*, or that it bears a strict analogy to that which subsists between sin and its penal sanction. No; the wages of sin is death; but 'eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' This point on which so many mistakes abound in the world, is very satisfactorily illustrated by an induction of particulars, in which it is shown—that nothing performed by a creature, however pure, can properly merit everlasting life—but that God, having designs of mercy towards his rebellious creatures, sent forth his Son to obey and suffer in their place resolving to bestow eternal life on all that believe in him, as the reward of his undertaking—that he now accepts believing sinners for the sake of his beloved Son, and not only blesses them with all spiritual blessings 'in him, through him, and for his sake,' but also rewards their services in his kingdom, through the same medium—their services become impregnated with his worthiness, their petitions also being offered up with the 'much incense' of his intercession. Thus God in approving the services of believers, approves of the obedience and sacrifice of his Son, of which they are the fruits; and in rewarding them, continues to reward him, or to express his good pleasure in his mediation.

Thus the apparent difficulty is removed, and the way paved for establishing the position, "that the joys of futurity will bear a relation to what is done for Christ in the present life, similar to that between the seed and the harvest." And here the preacher expatiates as in a boundless ocean of infinite delight—a subject to which his own powers, gigantic as they were, appear to have been felt inadequate. He takes a rapid glance at the labours of prophets, apostles, and the first ministers of the word; and witnessing their effects upon the general cause, finds ample encouragement for himself and his brethren to tread in their sacred steps. "We can form no competent ideas," says he, "at present, of the effects of good, any more than of evil. What we do of either is merely the kindling of a fire; how far it may burn we cannot tell, and, generally speaking, our minds

are but little occupied about it. Who can calculate the effects of a modest testimony borne to truth, of an importunate prayer for its success, of a disinterested act of self-denial, of a willing contribution, of a seasonable reproof, of a wholesome counsel, of even a sigh of pity, or a tear of sympathy? Each, or any of these exercises, may be the means in the Lord's hand, of producing that in the bosoms of individuals, which may be communicated to their connections, and from them to theirs, to the end of time."

Memoirs of Rev. Samuel Pearce, Pastor of the Baptist Church, Cannon-Street, Birmingham; with Extracts from some of his most interesting Letters. 1800.

We have sometimes read, and sometimes heard of a few such men as Mr. Pearce; but it is so rare a thing to see so much real excellence embodied in a living character, that some have even doubted whether these Memoirs exhibit a correct and impartial delineation. Those, however, who were best acquainted with Mr. Pearce, and his able Biographer, have the most ample assurance that a truer description was never given of any man, than is to be found in the pages of this interesting work. Partiality did nothing; it added no flattery to the portrait, gave no colouring to a faded countenance, nor concealed any of its defects; the charms of moral goodness drew the writer to his subject, fixed his admiration, and diffused themselves over every page.

Mr. Fuller, nevertheless, compiled these Memoirs under several advantages. He had a personal and intimate acquaintance with the subject, who lived long enough to unveil the splendour of his character, and died before a cloud had intervened; he was able, therefore, to give a full view of the interior, and to lay open the richest treasures of the heart. He was also amply provided with such resources as are rarely obtained, though very desirable in every similar undertaking; he had access to a variety of interesting letters, as well as the private journals written by Mr. Pearce. But one thing which eminently contributed to the acceptability of these Memoirs, and which has gained for them so high a place in the public estimation, is the judicious selection which the writer made of his materials: not suffering any thing to appear that was trite or uninteresting, or that tended to lessen the general effect. He

had no idea that every thing which could be said of a good man ought to be obtruded on the public, and was not a little disgusted with the nauseous manner in which certain editors continued from time to time, to retail "the offals" of the celebrated Mr. Romaine.* He, therefore, threw aside, as he afterwards acknowledged, a great number of unimportant anecdotes, while compiling the Memoirs of Mr. Pearce, and retained nothing but what was worthy of general regard. To this just discrimination we are indebted for one of the best specimens of christian biography, and perhaps, for the most useful of all Mr. Fuller's writings.

In forming an estimate of the character of his amiable friend, he fixes on what he calls the governing principle, which was HOLY LOVE; he then traces its various operations, throughout the tenor of his life. No one can properly view this picture, without discovering in it the hand of a master, nor without desiring an equal assimilation to the divine likeness.

"It is not enough to say of this affectionate spirit, that it formed a prominent feature in his character; it was rather the life blood that animated the whole system. He seemed, as one of his friends observed, to be baptized in it. It was holy love that gave the tone to his general deportment: as a son, a subject, a neighbour, a Christian, a minister, a pastor, a friend, a husband, and a father, he was manifestly governed by this principle; and this it was that produced in him that lovely uniformity of character, which constitutes the true beauty of holiness.

By the grace of God he was what he was; and to the honour of grace, and not for the glory of a sinful worm, be it recorded. Like all other men, he was the subject of a depraved nature. He felt and lamented it, and longed to depart that he might be freed from it: but certainly we have seldom seen a character, taking him altogether, whose excellencies were so many and so uniform, and whose imperfections were so few. We have seen men rise high in contemplation, who have abounded but little in action. We have seen zeal mingled with bitterness, and candour degenerate into indifference; experimental religion mixed with a large portion of enthusiasm; and what is called rational religion, void of every thing that interests the heart of man. We have seen splendid talents tarnished with insufferable pride; seriousness with melancholy; cheerfulness with levity; and great attainments in religion with uncharitable censoriousness towards men of low degree: but we have not seen these things in our brother Pearce.

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* An eloquent writer has observed, "that there are in truth very few particulars in any man's life worthy of being recorded; and of those who really have lived, a very short memoir indeed will serve all the valuable purposes of history." *Hunter's Biography.* Vol. vi. p. 383.

Finally: In him we see that the way to true excellence is not to affect eccentricity, nor to aspire after the performance of a few splendid actions; but to fill up our lives with a sober, modest, sincere, affectionate, assiduous, and uniform conduct. Real greatness attaches to character; and character arises from a course of action. The solid reputation of a merchant arises not from his having made his fortune by a few successful adventures; but from a course of wise economy, and honourable industry, which gradually accumulating, advances by pence to shillings, and by shillings to pounds. It is much the same in religion. We do not esteem a man for one, or two, or three good deeds, any farther than as these deeds are indications of the real state of his mind. We do not estimate the character of Christ himself so much from his having given sight to the blind, or restored Lazarus from the grave, as from his *going about continually doing good.*"

God's Approbation of our Labours necessary to the Hope of Success: A Sermon delivered at the annual meeting of the Bedford Union. May 6, 1801.

The text chosen as the foundation of this discourse, is Numbers xiv. 8, and its discussion is well suited to the occasion.

"Considering the object of the present meeting," says the preacher, "you will probably suppose that my thoughts have been employed in drawing a parallel between the undertaking of Israel to subdue the Canaanites, and take possession of their land in the name of Jehovah, and our undertaking to subdue to the obedience of Christ the hearts of his enemies both at home and abroad, and in this manner, take possession of the world for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is true, they have: and in discoursing upon the subject, I shall first attempt to justify the application by tracing the analogy between the two cases, and then consider the proviso on which we are given to expect success."

Under the former proposition, disclaiming all fanciful accommodations, Mr. Fuller considers the gift of Canaan to the Israelites as designed to prefigure the dominion promised to the Messiah, as well as preparatory to that glorious event. In both dispensations, the service of the true God was to supersede the kingdom of Satan; both undertakings were authorized by a divine command, and encouraged by a divine promise; both were to be accomplished gradually; and by means of ardent, deadly, and persevering struggles.

"All that Israel gained was by dint of sword. It was at the expense of many lives, yea, many thousands of lives, that they at last came to the full possession of the land, and that the promises of God were fulfilled towards them. The same may be said of the establishment of Christ's kingdom. It was by ardent and persevering struggles that the gospel was introduced into various nations, cities, and towns,

where it now is; and in many instances at the expense of life. But we have been so long inured to act under the shadow of civil protection, and without any serious inconvenience to our temporal interests, that we are startled at difficulties which the ancient Christians would have met with fortitude. They put their lives in their hands, 'standing in jeopardy every hour,' and though we cannot be sufficiently thankful for the protection we enjoy, yet we must not make this the condition of our activity for Christ. 'He that observeth the wind, shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds, shall not reap.' If ever God prosper us in any great degree, it will be in the exercise of that spirit by which the martyrs obtained a good report."

The proviso on which we are warranted to hope for success is this—*If the Lord* DELIGHT IN US, *then will he bring us into the land;* and by this is understood, "a complacency in our character and labours." It requires, that the object we pursue must be simply the cause of God, unmixed with worldly policy, or party interest; that the doctrine we teach must be that of Christ and him crucified; that the motive of our undertakings must be pure, not sordid nor vain; that in promoting them we must be sensible of our own insufficiency, and depend upon God; only that we must persevere in them to the end, and maintain the exercise of a lively faith in the power and promises of God.

In applying these several topics to the exertions made to spread the gospel, both among our ignorant countrymen around us, (which is the leading object of the Union formed at Bedford,) and in heathen nations, the same perspicuity, simplicity, and force of argument, are displayed, which have so strongly recommended Mr. Fuller's larger publications.

Prefixed to this animating discourse, is a brief account of the religious association to which it was addressed, and at whose request it was printed.

The Backslider; or an Enquiry into the Nature, Symptoms, and Effects of Religious Declension, with the Means of Recovery. 1801.

Though Mr. Fuller was much engaged in theological controversy, it seems to have been a duty imposed upon him by the circumstances of the times, and occasioned by the strong reasoning powers with which he was endued, rather than any preference he entertained for polemical divinity. Had he been left to his own choice, he would have produced several other Essays, like the present, of

great practical importance; but there was an almost incessant demand upon his time and attention for other discussions, which left him but little opportunity to pursue his favourite design.

Like many others of some standing in the ministry, he had observed "that several persons, of whom he once entertained a favourable opinion, and with whom he formerly walked in christian fellowship, had fallen, either from the doctrine or the practice of pure religion; and this it was that furnished an occasion for the present performance. He had also noticed, that the efforts which were making to spread the knowledge of the gospel, tended both to increase the number of persons who profess to believe its doctrines, and to call into activity many who make that profession, without believing with the heart unto righteousness.

Perhaps it is not possible, that zeal and activity should be generally excited among real Christians, without being exposed to the intrusion of some who are destitute of genuine religion; and of others who are very imperfectly acquainted with its power. The former will gladly cloak their hypocrisy with a show of zeal; and the latter, through ignorance of themselves, will aspire to the honour of teaching others what they need themselves to be taught. Hence, at such a period, instances of backsliding are likely to be not only more frequent, but more notorious, and more awful in proportion as means are used for the advancement of the gospel. Hence also those professors, whose lukewarmness and contractedness of mind are proof against all example and argument for exertion, are likely to avail themselves of the apostasy or declensions of some who have appeared zealous for a time, to harden their own hearts, and to settle the more complacently upon their lees. These dangers, which are but too strongly corroborated by lamentable facts, were sufficient to evince the necessity of "an inquiry into the nature, symptoms, and effects of religious declension, with the means of recovery."

Mr. Fuller distinguishes between the *total* backsliding of a hypocrite, and the *partial* backsliding of an unstable believer. He adds, however, the very needful caution, "that it will be difficult if not impossible, for the party himself, at the time, to perceive the difference:"—"The scriptures know nothing of that kind of confidence which renders men easy in their sins." He defines as various species of backsliding—a relinquishment of evangelical

doctrine—falling into some gross immorality—love of the world—conformity to it—and an eager and deep interest in political disputes.

The description given of the *symptoms* of this spiritual disease, is of the utmost importance in discovering its different stages; and perhaps there are few Christians who will not find their state, at one time or other, deeply implicated in some of those gradations which the Author has marked. Those, however, who are happily growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, will do well to observe the *first* signs of declension, that they may constantly be on their guard. Many who are least aware of a decline, may have made considerable progress in a departure from God; and it is often very difficult for a backslider to make himself sensible of his dangerous condition.

In pointing out the means of *recovery*, the Author dwells on the injurious and dangerous effects of sin lying upon the conscience unlamented; urges several considerations tending to excite repentance, and to awaken the mind to watchfulness and prayer. No one can attentively read these pungent remarks without deriving some spiritual benefit, and many have expressed their thankfulness to God for them. In an age when so little has been written on casuistical or experimental subjects, or written to so little purpose, this pamphlet is peculiarly acceptable; and though several large editions have already been disposed of, there can be no doubt but so long as the religion of the heart is cultivated, more will still be demanded.

The Obedience of Churches to their Pastors: A Sermon delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. T. Morgan, Birmingham. 1802.

Among Protestant Dissenters in general, but more especially in some denominations, the doctrine of 'obedience' and 'submission' to pastoral authority is as little understood or inculcated, as is that of religious equality in an ecclesiastical hierarchy. Between these wide extremes there is certainly a wholesome medium; but such is the imperfection of human nature, that it does not seem to be constituted for any medium. If we reject the domination of an antichristian priesthood, we are also required to reject with it every idea of subordination amongst the members of a christian church, and to level down all distinctions

between the functions of an office and the common privileges of private individuals. This is an error which requires to be corrected, though Mr. Fuller, from the practical system which he generally adopted in reference to other churches and ministers, was not the most likely person to apply the remedy.

On the present occasion, however, he undertakes, from Heb. xiii. 17, to explain the nature of that "obedience and submission which is required of a people towards their pastor:" and having premised, that his being freely chosen by the church, his ruling agreeably to the laws of Christ, and his walking himself according to the same rule, are essential to the exercise of legitimate authority; he finds the obedience of the people to consist in a cordial reception of his doctrine, a respect for his conversational advice, a deference to his judgment in the assemblies of the church, and a submission to his reproofs.

All this sounds very well, and accords with the dictates of reason and revelation: how it is reduced to practice, is quite another question. If the power of religion were duly felt, and our social habits a little more refined, no doubt these principles would freely operate; but there is a tendency in the present state of the dissenting discipline to neutralize, if not to render them perfectly nugatory; and in too many cases, ministers are expected to yield obedience rather than receive it.

The motives urged by the apostle are well illustrated in this sermon, and they are such as demand the most serious attention. Ministers are required to *watch*, with the most assiduous care, over the flock committed to their charge; to watch *for* them, with the tender solicitude of a father; while Satan, the world, and innumerable enemies, are watching against them, and waiting to take an advantage. Others may be intrusted with their property, their health, or their life; but ministers watch for *the souls* of their people, a charge of higher importance than that of kingdoms and empires. They do it also as those that must *give account*, not only of the manner in which they have discharged their trust, but likewise of the people committed to their care. Under this head are the following pungent interrogations:

"And what will be the account of your pastor? Will he be able to say to the chief Shepherd, 'Here am I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me?' O that he might! But it is much to be feared that some of you who are this day committed to his charge, will in

that day be missing; and what account will he then have to give? Will he not have to say, 'Lord, some of them neglected thy word: some have resisted it; some have reproached me for preaching it; some have deserted it, and turned aside after lying vanities; some who have continued, have not received the love of the truth that they might be saved; hearing, they have heard, and not understood; seeing, they have seen, and not perceived; their heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed?' And how if, when interrogated, he should not be able to acquit himself? How if it should prove, that he did not warn you, nor seek after you, nor care for you? Ah, then you will perish, and your blood will be required at his hand! Who, alas, who is sufficient for these things? At all events, for your own sake, and for his sake, do not hinder him in his work. Wo unto him, if he preach not the gospel; and wo unto you, if you oppose him in it. In short, if you have any regard to your own souls, or the souls of others, obey the counsels of Heaven, which are communicated to you through his ministry, and submit yourselves."

This is one of the Author's best sermons; it is remarkably condensed, and full of interesting sentiment.

Expository Remarks on the Discipline of the Primitive Churches.

This small but valuable tract, originally written at the request of the Baptist Churches and Ministers of the Northamptonshire Association, was afterwards printed in another form, and passed through several large editions. At the time of composing it, the Author went through the whole of the New Testament, in order to collect all the passages which bore upon the subject; and hence he entitled his performance, "Expository Remarks." Under the term 'Discipline," however, he did not intend to include the whole of the order of a christian church; but only that part of it which consists in the members having a mutual care over one another, and the conduct we are directed to pursue in cases of offence.

The points of forbearance in a religious community, he restricts to such as may exist without being an occasion of dispute and wrangling; such as do not enter into the essence of Christ's kingdom; do not supersede his authority, subvert the gospel, or destroy the work of God. In dealing with offenders, he points out the motives which ought to guide the conduct of the society; he also guards against the extremes of false tenderness and unchristian severity, and distinguishes between faults which arise from sudden temptation, and such as are the effect of habit. The duties of church members individually, one towards another, and

of the pastor in his official capacity, are next explained. On this point some important sentiments occur, not more remarkable for their justness, than for the undeserved manner in which they are too generally neglected.

"In all our admonitions, regard should be had to the age and character of the party. An elder, as well as other men, may be in fault, and a fault that may require to be noticed; but let him be told of it in a tender and respectful manner. While you expostulate with younger men on a footing of equality, pay a deference to age and office. 'Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a Father, and the younger men as brethren.' In cases of *evil report*, where things are said of a brother, which if true must affect his character, and the purity of the church, it cannot be right to go on to report it. Love will not lead to this. Many reports we know are unfounded; or if true in the main, they may have been aggravated; or there may be circumstances attending the case, which, if fully understood, would make things appear very different from the manner in which they have been represented. Now it is almost impossible that any one but the party himself should be acquainted with all these circumstances, or able to give a full account of them. No time, therefore, should be lost, ere we inquire at the hand of our brother."

Better counsel than this could not by given: it is founded in the truest equity. But it might be asked, where is the practical example? Instead of "inquiring immediately at the hand of an accused brother," he is often the last person of whom any such inquiry is made.

The objects of direct and unqualified censure, as here stated, are—a departure from the faith of the gospel, or any of its leading doctrines—and cases of notorious and complicated wickedness. Much excellent advice is offered on the manner of conducting the censures of the church, the treatment proper to be observed in cases of excommunication, and on several other topics connected with primitive discipline. Certainly, nothing is more wanted towards the improvement of the general state of christian fellowship, than a practical exhibition of these Expository Remarks.

Christian Patriotism; or the Duty of Religious People towards their Country. A Discourse delivered at Kettering, Aug. 14, 1803.

The spirit of Christianity, which breathes nothing but peace and good will towards men, is so repugnant to the profession of arms, that it required something like scriptural arguments to satisfy the consciences of "religious people," that it was their duty to enrol themselves in the

volunteer corps, which at that time began to make so formidable an appearance throughout the country, and which the dread of invasion had called into existence.

To accomplish this purpose, the preacher chose the words of Jeremiah to the Jews in captivity; 'Seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof ye shall have peace.' Having observed that the Jews were at that time enslaved, abused, and insulted by their enemies, he asks; "If such was the duty of men in their circumstances, can there be any doubt with respect to *ours?*"—"The invader was to them a deliverer: but to us, beyond all doubt, he would be a destroyer."

The duty of Christians is then first considered, and afterwards the motive by which it is enforced.

In explanation of the former, it is observed, that our duty consists in 'seeking the peace of the city,' and 'praying to the Lord for it.' Those who do this, will not disturb the public peace by inflammatory speeches, by spreading discontent, exciting disgust against public measures, and contempt of magistrates. They will do all they can to promote its welfare; and whatever be their political system, will support government as long as it answers the great ends of its existence; they will sacrifice their private interest, and in case of imminent danger expose their lives in its defence.

The Author here refutes the idea, that defence is wrong in all cases. He cites the example of Abraham in the Old Testament; and in the New, the conduct of Paul at Philippi. At the same time he condemns the modern notions of honour, and maxims of revenge. He also remarks, that Christians are not to use the sword in defence of their own principles; and that such as have, on this ground, taken the sword, have usually perished by the sword; instancing, as examples, the Albigenses, the Bohemians, and the French Protestants. But the defence of civil order stands on different grounds; and if all were thus to neglect their duty, the magistrate would indeed 'bear the sword in vain.' It is no sin, says he, to be a soldier; witness two believing centurions. John did not reprove the soldiers for bearing arms, but instructed them in their duty as soldiers.

With respect to the injustice of a war, it is observed, that it is of a very complex nature, and that we are unacquainted with many facts, the knowledge of which is necessary to enable us to decide the point. One thing we

know, whether it be right that one nation should seek the utter ruin of another—it is evidently our duty to resist such an attempt, however it may have been provoked.

Another part of our duty consists in 'praying to the Lord,' for public peace and prosperity. We should beware that all our dependence as a nation is upon God, and that a great load of guilt lies upon our country.

In considering the *motive*, we are told that our duty is graciously interwoven with our interest: 'Ye shall have peace.' The preacher then draws a picture of the miseries which all ranks of life would endure, as citizens, as relations, and as Christians, if the public tranquillity were disturbed. Happily, these groundless apprehensions have long since passed away; and the sermon only remains, unsatisfactory as it is, to perpetuate the "Christian Patriotism" of its Author.

A Vindication of Protestant Dissent, from the Charges of the Rev. Thomas Robinson, Vicar of St. Mary's, Leicester. 1804.

At the time this little pamphlet was written, a spirit of opposition ran high against the evangelical clergy; and some of their bitterest enemies were found amongst the members of the established church. A long and acrimonious controversy had been maintained, for and against an evangelical construction of the Articles, and on the tendency of the evangelical ministry; and though the adverse party failed in their proof, and were eventually defeated, they did not fail to get preferments in the church for their hostilities to the truth, nor to inspire their more enlightened brethren with the terrors of dissent.

Mr. Robinson, though in other respects a man of great excellence, was at all times a rigid churchman, entertaining high notions of Episcopal prerogatives, and of the precedence due to the establishment. No man more carefully avoided an approach to the contaminating principles of dissent; and while he honoured a few eminent individuals with his friendship, among whom Mr. Fuller himself was one, he maintained a chilling distance from the general body of nonconformists. But the particular class to which he himself belonged, having fallen under severe suspicion, unjustly enough, that they had crept within the pale under an Episcopal disguise, as their adversaries insinuated,

merely for the purpose of lowering character, and calumniating the arguments which they could not answer, Mr. Robinson was tempted to give an immoderate display of his attachment; and in the warmth of his zeal in defence of Episcopacy, he made some foul attacks on the opposite party.

Though Mr. Fuller was the advocate of union, rather than of dissent, and bore towards Mr. Robinson a considerable share of esteem; yet he could not suffer any personal considerations to interfere with the obligations he owed to truth, nor that the imposing authority of so respectable a clergyman, in his own neighbourhood, should obtrude upon the public attention without examining its claims. He, nevertheless, entered upon his "Vindication" with great reluctance, and suffered it to appear without a name.

His defence of Protestant Dissent seems reducible to two positions:—That the Church of England is *not* agreeable to the scriptural and apostolic form; and that if it be, it is not *exclusively;* so as to have any right to claim the universal obedience of a particular tract of country.

In reply to the charges which had been exhibited, he observes that while Mr. Robinson attempts to prove the established church apostolical in its "order of ministers," he neither cites any scripture, nor any authority for the office of *arch*-bishops, *arch*-deacons, deans, or priests; nor shows that the rank was in use, even though the name were not recorded; nor that one set of pastors were controllable by another.

He then examines and refutes the position, "That it is the duty of the subject to obey the ordinances of the church, unless they can be proved contrary to divine injunction." He remarks, that if the apostles, like the popish church, had attempted to convert whole nations at once, and had acted on Mr. Robinson's principle, they would have framed different modes of worship in different places; they would have examined how much of the old materials of heathen superstition, "not directly contrary to divine injunction," would do to work up again; they would also make as few alterations as possible, and introduce old things under new names.

Mr. Robinson's defence of the English church, he observes, would as well apply to the church of Rome. It might be said, 'She has her bishops, priests, and deacons; that her chain of subordination from the laity through the

clergy, and the bishops to the pope, is "reasonable and expedient;" that these, and many other "decent and edifying" things ought not to be rejected, unless they can be proved "contrary to express divine injunction." But, says the Author, to believe a doctrine, or practise a form, even if it may be innocent, merely on the ground of human authority, *destroys the very principle of christian obedience.* He answers Mr. Robinson's encomiums on the doctrinal purity of the church by saying, that the Articles do not show what the church *is*, but what the church *was;* and that not one in ten believes them in their obvious meaning.

The disputes among dissenters having been alleged, Mr. Fuller rebuts the objection in the following manner:

"The clergy put various meanings on their own articles; and the peace which is boasted by the church, is perhaps not so much the fruit of meekness and brotherly love, as the cause of indifference, and the stillness of ecclesiastical despotism. We see in the great body of the members of this community, not 'saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus;' not 'a congregation of faithful men,' as the Articles define a church, but men of the world; men who would be ashamed to be thought *saints*, and who deride all spiritual religion. Where the spirit and conduct are evidently diverse from christianity; where no pretence is made to any other than traditional assent, which in Turkey would have made them Mahometans, and in China, Pagans; where the very idea of 'being born of God' is derided, and all spiritual religion regarded with contempt: to consider such persons as believers, is an abuse of charity and candour; and to treat them as such, is to foster self-deception."

This little piece abounds with manly sense, good humour, precision of thought, and a perspicuity and force of reasoning, corresponding with Mr. Fuller's other publications. Mr. Robinson read this performance, acknowledged that it was written in a good spirit, but said he was not convinced. No, replied the Author, nor did I expect it: it will be enough, however, if others should be convinced.

The Great Question Answered.

This small pamphlet was written at the request of a very worthy gentleman, who wished to distribute among the inhabitants of the north, a plain, practical piece, tending to awaken the consciences of the careless, and excite a serious inquiry about the salvation of their souls. The writer has, therefore, very suitably chosen for his subject, the question of the Philippian jailer: 'What must I do to

be saved?' And the apostle's answer: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'

In writing this pointed address to the unconverted, Mr. Fuller also intended to display the practical efficacy of those views of faith which he had so frequently contended for in his polemical works, and their adaptation to the case and conscience of the perishing and unbelieving. In this attempt he has been happily successful, and some of his warmest opponents are said to have expressed their satisfaction in the views that are here exhibited. The tract has had an extensive circulation, in a variety of forms, and has been translated into some of the foreign languages.

Expository Discourses on the Book of Genesis, interspersed with Practical Reflections. 2 vols. 1806.

The contents of these volumes, consisting of fifty-eight short discourses, were not, originally, intended for the press. The Author had been in the habit of delivering expository lectures for several years to his own congregation, on various parts of Scripture; and after proceeding a considerable way in the book of Genesis, without having preserved any thing more than a few short notes occasionally, which served as an index to his intended discourse, he was earnestly requested by a friend to give the substance of his commentary to the public. With this request he reluctantly complied; and after delivering his discourses from the pulpit, he copied the general outline for the press.

In executing this performance, he selects a chapter or a section of convenient length, and furnishes a concise exposition of its leading circumstances, accompanied with a few pointed reflections. This method, though necessarily too limited for the expansive powers of the writer, is pursued with the happiest effect; and it is difficult to conceive of a larger quantity of pithy matter being compressed within so small a compass. He is, perhaps, more successful when a freedom from such restraints enables him to explore widely, to examine minutely, and to contend in open ground with the oppositions of enmity and error; but of all Mr. Fuller's writings, none have a higher claim to general regard, for their utility and practical importance, than his volumes on the Book of Genesis.

The historical and descriptive parts are peculiarly interesting, and exhibit some of the finest specimens of moral painting. We are not only made acquainted with the principal events and transactions in the lives of the antediluvian patriarchs; but we seem to be present at the scene, to behold them with our eyes, to develope the secrets of character, the springs of action, and to become intimate at once with the generations before the flood. The trial of the original transgressors, after their fall, and the doom denounced upon them, are among the distinguishing features of this performance. The effects of sin in perverting the understanding and polluting the heart, introducing prevarication and deceit, bringing guilt and shame upon the offenders, and ruin upon an unborn world, are depicted in the most vivid colours, and adapted to make a deep and lasting impression.

The violence which preceded and introduced the flood, with all its tremendous consequences, is traced to an analogy with some of the awful events of the portentous period in which the lectures were delivered, and accompanied with a seasonable admonition to the kings and rulers of the earth.

"From the influence of corruption in producing violence," says the Expositor, of Gen. vi. 11, "and bringing on the deluge, we may see the importance of pure religion, and those who adhere to it, to the well-being of society. They are the preserving principle, the salt of the earth; and when they are banished, or in any way become extinct, the consequences will soon be felt. While the sons of God are kept together, and continue faithful, God would not destroy the world for their sakes; but when reduced to a single family, he would, as in the case of Lot, take that away, and destroy the rest. The late convulsions of a neighbouring nation, may, I apprehend, be easily traced to this cause: all their violence originated in the corruption of the true religion. About a hundred and thirty years ago, the law which protected the reformation in that country was repealed; and almost all the religious people were either murdered or banished. The consequence was, as might have been expected, the great body of the nation, princes, priests, and people, sunk into infidelity. The protestant religion, while it continued, was the salt of the state; but when banished, and superstition had nothing left to counteract it, things soon hastened to a crisis. Popery, aided by a despotic civil government, brought forth infidelity; and the child as soon as it grew up to maturity, murdered its own parents. If the principal part of religious people in *this* or any other country were driven away, the rest would soon become infidels, and practical atheists; and what every order and degree of men would have to expect from the prevalence of these principles, there is no want of examples to inform them."

In remarking on the covenant made with Noah after the flood Mr. Fuller finds occasion to illustrate a principle of fundamental importance to the system of revelation; and shows that God's exercising mercy towards the unworthy, for the sake of one that was righteous, and as the means of expressing his love of righteousness, was fully recognized in the divine economy, and exhibited under every dispensation. Many interesting observations on this subject appear in different parts of the work.

Abraham's entertaining angels unawares, is introduced with good effect, as an instance of patriarchal hospitality and politeness. His condescension towards Lot, and the amiable manner in which he prevents a disagreement between them, are adduced as an example highly worthy of imitation, in settling disputes among brethren, and accompanied with a happy display of the pacific tendency of Christianity. Abraham's being transformed into a warrior to save Lot, his military movements and exploits, his interview with Melchisedek and the king of Sodom, are well supported, and give a peculiar interest to this part of sacred history.

But as the life of Abraham was more prolific of important events, than that of any other of the patriarchs, and afforded an opportunity of illustrating some of the leading principles of the gospel to the greatest advantage, the preacher seizes on one of these; and with the hand of a master, gives the following sketch of the doctrine of Justification by faith, from Gen. xv. 4—6.

"Much is made of this passage by the apostle Paul, in establishing the doctrine of justification by faith; and much has been said by others, as to the meaning of both Paul and Moses. One set of expositors, considering it as extremely evident that by faith is here meant *the act of believing*, contend for this as our justifying righteousness. Faith, in their account, seems to be imputed to us for righteousness by a kind of gracious compromise, in which God accepts of an imperfect, instead of a perfect obedience. Another set of expositors, jealous for the honour of free grace, and of the righteousness of Christ, contend that the faith of Abraham is here to be taken *objectively*, for the righteousness of Christ believed in. To me it appears that both these expositions are forced. To establish the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, it is not necessary to maintain that the faith of Abraham means Christ in whom he believed. Nor can this be maintained: for it is manifestly the same thing, in the account of the apostle Paul, as *believing*,* which is very distinct from the object believed in. The truth appears to be this:—It is faith, or believing, that is counted for righteousness; not as a righteous act, or on account

* Rom. iv. 5.

of any inherent virtue contained in it, but *in respect of Christ, on whose righteousness it terminates.**

That we may form a clear idea, both of the text and the doctrine, let the following particulars be considered.

1. Though Abraham believed God when he left Ur of the Chaldees,† yet his faith in that instance is not mentioned *in connection with his justification:* nor does the apostle, either in his epistle to the Romans, or in that to the Galatians, argue that doctrine from it, or hold it up as an example of justifying faith. I do not mean to suggest, that Abraham was then in an unjustified state; but that the instance of his faith which was thought proper by the Holy Spirit to be selected as the model for believing unto justification, was not this, nor any other of the kind; but those only in which there was *an immediate respect had to the person of the Messiah.* The examples of faith referred to in both these epistles, are taken from his believing the promises relative to his *seed*; in which seed, as the apostle observes, *Christ* was included.‡ Though Christians may believe in God with respect to the common concerns of this life, and such faith may ascertain their being in a justified state; yet this is not, strictly speaking, the faith by which they are justified, which invariably has respect to the person and work of Christ. Abraham believed in God as *promising* Christ: they believe in him as having *raised him from the dead.* 'By him all that believe, (that is *in him*) are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.' It is through *faith in his blood*, that they obtain remission of sins—He is just, and the justifier of him that *believeth in Jesus.*§

2. This distinction, so clearly perceivable both in the Old and New Testament, sufficiently decides in what sense faith is considered as justifying. Whatever other properties the magnet may possess, it is as pointing invariably to the north that it guides the mariner: so whatever other properties faith may possess, it is *as pointing to Christ* and bringing us into union *with him*, that it justifies.‖ It is not that *for the sake of which* we are accepted of God: for if it were, justification by faith could not be opposed to justification by works, nor could boasting be excluded; neither would there be any meaning in its being said to be by faith, *that it might be of grace.* But believing in Christ, we are considered by the Lawgiver of the world as one with him, and so are accepted and forgiven *for his sake.* Hence it is, that to be justified by faith is the same thing as to be justified *by the blood of Christ*, or made righteous *by his obedience.*¶ Faith is not the grace wherein we stand, but that by which we *have access* to it.** Thus it is, that the healing of various maladies is ascribed, in the New Testament, to faith; not that the virtue which caused the cures, proceeded from this as its proper cause; but this was a necessary concomitant, to give the parties *access* to the power and grace of the Saviour, by which only they were healed.

3. The phrase, 'counted it for righteousness,' does not mean that God thought it to be what it was, which would have been merely an act of justice; but his graciously reckoning it what in itself it was not; viz. a ground for the bestowment of covenant blessings. Even in the case of Phinehas, of whom the same phrase is used in reference

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* Calvin's Inst. b. iii. ch. xi. sect. 7. † Heb. xi. 8.
‡ Rom. iv. 11. Gal. iii. 16. § Rom. iv. 24. Acts xiii. 39. Rom. iii. 25, 26. ‖ Rom. viii. 1. 1 Cor. i. 30. Phil. iii. 9.
¶ Rom. v. 9, 19. ** Rom. v. 2.

to his zeal for God, it has this meaning; for one single act of zeal, whatever may be said of it, could not entitle him, and his posterity after him, to the honour conferred upon them.* And with respect to the present case, "the phrase, as the apostle uses it, (says a great writer) manifestly imports that God of his sovereign grace is pleased, in his dealings with the sinner, to take and regard that which indeed is not righteousness, and in one who has no righteousness, so that the consequence shall be the same as if he had righteousness, and which may be from the respect it bears to something which is indeed righteousness."† The faith of Abraham, though of a holy nature, yet contained nothing in itself fit for a justifying righteousness; all the adaptedness which it possessed to that end was the respect which it had to the Messiah, on whom it terminated.

Though faith is not our justifying righteousness, yet it is a necessary concomitant and means of justification; and being the grace which above all others honours Christ, it is that which above all others God delights to honour. Hence it is that justification is ascribed to it, rather than to the righteousness of Christ without it. Our Saviour might have said to Bartimeus, 'Go thy way, *I* have made thee whole.' This would have been truth, but not the whole of the truth which it was his design to convey. The necessity of faith, in order to healing, would not have appeared from this mode of speaking; nor had any honour been done, or encouragement been given to it. But, by his saying, 'Go thy way, *thy faith* hath made the whole,' each of these ideas is conveyed. Christ would omit mentioning his own honour, as knowing that faith having an immediate respect to him, amply provided for it."

The discourse on Abraham's offering up his son, in which the triumph of faith over the feelings of nature is so affectingly recorded, affords one of the finest specimens of the preacher's ability. The expository form is dropped, and a regular discussion is assumed; in which peculiar skill is discovered in investigating the different parts of the subject, placing them all in a strong light, and tracing their relations to each other, and their reference to distant and neglected objects. The whole of this discourse is unusually pathetic, and cannot be read without the liveliest interest.

The life of Isaac, which produced but few incidents, is dismissed with consistent brevity; but that of the illustrious Joseph occupies more than half the second volume. Mr. Fuller acknowledges that he entered on the narrative with some dismay, and felt in the course of his composition that no human hand could touch the subject without deteriorating the divine original. There are, notwithstanding, many affecting passages in this part of the work, many indications of ingenuous sensibility blended with a variety of acute and original remarks. The prudence and the

* Psl. cvi. 31, compared with Num. xxv. 12, 13.
† President Edward's Sermons on Justification, Disc. i. p. 9.

policy of Joseph, the dangers of pre-eminence, Jacob's interview with Pharaoh, and that of Joseph with his brethren, are illustrated with singular felicity; and in Judah's oration on behalf of his brother Benjamin, the preacher finds one of the finest specimens of eloquence any where to be met with either in ancient or modern times.

The conclusion of this exposition is highly forcible and argumentative: the doctrine of human depravity, and of salvation by free grace, are shown to have an inseparable connection, and to be interwoven with the history of man.

"None can deny the fact, that men are what they ought not to be; but how they came to be so, cannot be told. To say, as many do, that the stock is good, but that it gets corrupt in rearing, is to reason in a manner that no one would have the face to do in any other case. If a tree were found, which in every climate, every age, every soil, and under every kind of cultivation, brought forth the fruits of death, no body would hesitate to pronounce it of a *poisonous nature*. Such is the account given us by revelation, and this book informs us how it became so. It is true, it does not answer curious questions on this awful subject. It traces the origin of evil as far as sobriety and humility would wish to inquire. It states the fact, that God 'made man upright, and that he hath sought out many inventions:' but there it leaves it.

If the doctrine of the fall, as narrated in this book be admitted, that of salvation by free grace, through the atonement of Christ, will follow of course. I do not say that redemption by Christ could be inferred from the fall itself; but being revealed in the same sacred book, we cannot believe the one, without feeling the necessity of the other.

Finally: Look at the antipathy which is every where to be seen between the righteous and the wicked, between them that fear God and them that fear him not. All the narratives which have passed under our review, as those of Cain and Abel, Enoch and his cotemporaries, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, are pictures of originals, which the world continues in every age to exhibit. But this book traces this antipathy to its source, and gives us reason to expect its continuance, till Satan and his cause shall be bruised under our feet."

The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns: A Sermon delivered at Clipstone, Northamptonshire, April, 1791.

This sermon has already been mentioned, as preparing the way for missionary undertakings, and as having produced a powerful effect at the time it was delivered.*

* See Chapter iv.

Various excuses had been urged in favour of delay, and some of them apparently prudential; but Mr. Fuller exposes their futility, and shows that they had their origin in carnal policy, and indifference to the best interests of religion. This sermon gave an impetus to the missionary spirit that was already afloat, and brought the subject to a crisis in the minds of those who heard it; its subsequent publication had a similar happy effect upon multitudes who were not present at the time of its delivery.

CHAPTER VIII.

Review of Mr. Fuller's Doctrinal and Practical Writings—Dialogues and Essays on various Subjects—Jesus the true Messiah—Sermons on various Subjects—Funeral Sermon for the Rev. John Sutcliffe, with a Brief Sketch of his Character—Narrative of the Baptist Mission—Adam's View of Religions, with an Essay on Truth—Discourses on the Apocalypse.

The advantages which Mr. Fuller derived from polemical discussion, are very apparent in his subsequent writings on doctrinal and practical subjects. There is a stronger nerve and a higher tone in his moral system, than is commonly found in cotemporary writers; for though the same truths might be generally acknowledged, few men had the faculty of placing them so full in view, or investing them with such high and fearful importance. Controversy not only deepened his penetration, and added keenness to his discernment, but stamped a greater value on those principles which he had recovered from the Amorites with his sword and his bow.

The article which introduces the present chapter, resulted principally from those laborious investigations in which he had been previously engaged, and was chiefly composed in the serious hours of sickness and retirement, after the tumult of debate was over, and when his thoughts had ripened to maturity. Religious sentiment never was with him a matter of speculation. He had long seen that the interests of personal religion were involved in the principles which he had endeavoured to defend; and being left in full possession, he employed them in every variety of form that could give proof of their practical efficacy. Hence in his preaching, and in his writing, there is a sort of mandatory style, which bespeaks a conviction of their

vital importance, and a pungency of appeal from which the reader cannot easily escape.

Dialogues, Letters, and Essays, on various Subjects. 1806.

Though this work did not admit of a systematic arrangement, it nevertheless illustrates and defends many of the leading doctrines of the gospel in a very satisfactory manner, and may properly be considered as a compendious body of divinity. The papers which compose this volume are classed under three principal divisions. Part the First is on FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES; and consists of nine Dialogues and five Letters, between Crispus and Gaius—on the peculiar turn of the present age—importance of truth—connection between doctrinal, experimental, and practical religion—moral character of God—free-agency of man—antinomianism—goodness of the moral law—total depravity of human nature—and the consequences resulting from it.

The first dialogue, which admirably describes the peculiar turn of the present age, concludes with this just and striking discrimination of character:

"*Crispus.* What evidence have we, that religious people are influenced by a spirit of indifference?

Gaius. The crying up of one part of religion at the expense of another. You may often hear of practical religion as being every thing; and of speculative opinions (which is the fashionable name for doctrinal sentiments,) as matters of very little consequence. Because they are not cognizable by the civil magistrate, they treat them as if they were of no account; and by opposing them to practical religion, the unwary are led to conclude that the one has no dependance on the other. The effect of this has been, that others, from an attachment to doctrinal principles, have run to a contrary extreme. They write and preach in favour of doctrines, and what are called the privileges of the gospel, to the neglect of subjects which immediately relate to practice. In other circles you may hear experience, or experimental religion, extolled above all things, even at the expense of christian practice, and of sound doctrine. But, really, the religion of Jesus ought not thus to be mangled and torn in pieces. Take away the doctrines of the gospel, and you take away the food of Christians. Insist on them alone, and you transform us into religious epicures. And you may as well talk of the pleasure you experience in eating, when you are actually deprived of sustenance, or of the exquisite enjoyments of a state of total inactivity, as boast of experimental religion, unconnected with doctrinal and practical godliness. The conduct of a man who walks with God, appears to me to resemble that of the industrious husbandman, who eats that he may be strengthened to labour, and who by labour is prepared to enjoy his food."

The consequences resulting from the doctrine of human depravity, in the fifth Letter, are pointed out in the Author's best manner; and his exposure of the Hyper-calvinistic scheme, is very masterly and decisive. The duty of ministers relative to their unconverted hearers, is here exhibited in a style of reasoning that justly challenges the most serious regard of all who desire to 'make full proof of their ministry.' Mr. Fuller very forcibly remarks,

"Instead of its being a question, whether ministers should exhort their carnal auditors to any thing spiritually good, it deserves to be seriously considered, *whether it be not at their peril to exhort them to any thing short of it.*

"If all duty consists in the genuine operations and expressions of the heart, it must be utterly wrong for ministers to compromise matters with the enemies of God, by exhorting them to mere external actions, or to such a kind of exercise as may be performed without the love of God. The truth is, there is no way for a sinner to take, in which he can find solid rest, but that of returning home to God by Jesus Christ. 'Repent and believe the gospel. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' If the answer be, We cannot comply with these things, our hearts are too hard;—the servant of God having warned them, that what they call their incapacity is no other than a wicked aversion to God and goodness; that they judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, and that their blood will be upon their own heads,—must there leave them. His soul may weep in secret for them, but it is at his peril to compromise the matter."

Part the Second consists of MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,—on the nature of regeneration—different degrees in glory—the unpardonable sin—on the ministry—the manner in which divine truth is communicated in the Holy Scriptures—connection in which the doctrine of election is introduced in the Scriptures—on evil things which pass under specious names—the deity of Christ essential to atonement—the Sonship of Christ—obedience and death of Christ—necessity of seeking those things first which are of the first importance—the proper and improper use of terms.

The piece on Regeneration, proving that the Spirit of God produces a new principle in the heart, and not merely imparts a new light to the understanding, is highly interesting and important. That on the manner in which Divine Truth is communicated in the Scriptures, contains the following impressive passage:

"It is not very difficult to discern the wisdom of God in introducing truth in such a manner. If every species of plants and flowers were to grow together, instead of the whole being scattered over the earth, the effect would be very different, and much for the worse: and if all

truth relating to one subject, were to be found only in one book, chapter or epistle, we should probably understand much less than we do. There are some divine truths which are less pleasant than others. Even good men have their partialities, or favourite principles, which would induce them to read those parts of Scripture which favoured them, to the neglect of others. But truth being scattered throughout the Scriptures, we are thereby necessitated, if we read at all, to read the whole mind of God; and thus it is that we gradually and insensibly imbibe it, and become assimilated to the same image. The conduct of God in this matter, resembles that of a wise physician, who, in prescribing for a child, directs that its medicine be mixed up with its necessary food."

On the Deity and Sonship of Christ, a number of original remarks occur, highly worthy of attention. The writer has successfully driven the Socinians and Arians from their strong holds, and entrenched himself so skilfully in the fair plains of reason and revelation, that the utmost fury of the enemy can never dislodge him.

Christians of all denominations might read his piece on Seeking those things First which are of the First Importance, to great advantage, and cannot but admire the liberality with which his sentiments are stated.

"If we wish to promote the Dissenting interest, it must not be by expending our principal zeal in endeavouring to make men Dissenters, but in making Dissenters and others Christians. The principles of dissent, however just and important, are not to be compared with the glorious gospel of the blessed God. If we wish to see the Baptist denomination prosper, we must not expend our zeal so much in endeavouring to make men Baptists, as in labouring to make Baptists and others Christians. By rejoicing in the prosperity of every other denomination, in as far as they accord with the mind of Christ, we shall promote the best interest of our own."

Part the Third, which consists of ORIGINAL PIECES, not before published, contains, amongst other things, three conversations on imputation—substitution—and particular redemption. On the first of these topics, Mr. Fuller opposes the notion of Christ's becoming guilty by imputation; and states his own views of the subject in the following manner:

"The term, *guilty*, I am aware, is often used by theological writers, for an obligation to punishment; and in this sense it applies to that voluntary obligation which Christ came under, to sustain the punishment of our sins. But, strictly speaking, guilt is the *desert* of punishment; and this can apply to none but the offender. It is the opposite of innocence. A voluntary obligation to endure the punishment of another is not guilt, any more than a consequent exemption from obligation in the offender, is innocence. Both guilt and innocence

are transferable in their effects; but in themselves they are intransferable. To say that Christ was reckoned or counted in the divine administration, *as if he were* the sinner, and came under an obligation to endure the curse or punishment due to our sins, is one thing: but to say he *deserved* that curse, is another. Guilt, strictly speaking, is the inseparable attendant of transgression, and could never therefore for one moment, occupy the conscience of Christ. If Christ by imputation became deserving of punishment, we by non-imputation cease to deserve it; and if our demerits be literally transferred to him, his merits must of course be the same to us; and then, instead of approaching God as guilty and unworthy, we might take consequence to ourselves before him, as not only guiltless but meritorious beings."

He quotes Calvin's opinion in support of his own, and exposes the absurdity of some of Dr. Crisp's sentiments. On Substitution, Mr. Fuller gives the following statement, relative to the sufficiency of the atonement:

"It is a fact, that the Scriptures rest the general invitations of the gospel upon the atonement of Christ. But if there were not a sufficiency in the atonement for the salvation of sinners without distinction, how could the ambassadors of Christ beseech them to be reconciled to God, and that from the consideration of his having been made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? What would you think of the fallen angels being invited to be reconciled to God, from the consideration of an atonement having been made for fallen *men?* You would say, it is inviting them to partake of a benefit which has no existence; the obtaining of which, therefore, is *naturally impossible.*

"Upon the supposition of the atonement being insufficient for the salvation of any more than are actually saved by it, the non-elect are in the same state, with respect to a reconciliation to God through it, as the fallen angels; that is, the thing is not only morally but *naturally impossible.* But if there be an objective fulness in the atonement of Christ, sufficient for any number of sinners, were they to believe in him, there is no other impossibility in the way of any man's salvation to whom the gospel comes, than what arises from the state of his own mind. The intention of God not to remove this impossibility, and so not to save him, is a purpose to withhold not only that which he was not obliged to bestow, but that which is never represented in the Scriptures as necessary to the consistence of exhortations or invitations."

The conversations on these subjects, between "Peter, James, and John," who personated Mr. Booth, Mr. Fuller, and Dr. Ryland, were intended to illustrate the points in dispute between the two former, and to remove some injurious misrepresentations which then existed. The discussion of these topics is conducted with consummate ability, and forms a most interesting part of the Author's writings. The conclusion, which proceeds very properly from the umpire, is in the true spirit of the gospel.

"I conceive, my dear brethren," says John, "that you have each said as much on these subjects as is likely to be for edification. Permit me, after having heard, and candidly attended to all that has passed between you, to assure you both of my esteem, and to declare that in my opinion, the difference between you ought not to prevent your feeling towards and treating each other as brethren. The greater part of those things wherein you seem to differ, may be owing either to a difference in the manner of expressing yourselves, or to the affixing of consequences to a principle which yet are unperceived by him that holds it. I do not accuse either of you with doing so intentionally: but principles and their consequences are so suddenly associated in the mind, that when we hear a person avow the former, we can scarcely forbear immediately attributing to him the latter. If a principle be proposed to us for acceptance, it is right to weigh the consequences; but when forming our judgment of the person who holds it, we should attach nothing to him but what he perceives and avows. If by an exchange of ideas you can come to a better understanding, it will afford me pleasure: meanwhile, it is some satisfaction that your visit to me has not tended to widen, but considerably to diminish your differences. Brethren, there are many adversaries of the gospel around you, who would rejoice to see you at variance. Let there be no strife between you, you are both erring mortals; but both, I trust, the sincere friends of the Lord Jesus. Love one another!"

Jesus, the true Messiah: A Sermon delivered in the Jews' Chapel, Church Street, Spital Fields, Nov. 19, 1809. *Printed for the Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews.*

On such an occasion it might be expected that the preacher would endeavour to substantiate the evidence in favour of the Messiahship of Jesus; and though the subject was pretty well exhausted, that such a preacher as Mr. Fuller would be able to advance something new and interesting, or would select some topic for discussion that should carry conviction to the understanding of his hearers.

Having chosen for his text, Psalm xl. 6—8, he encounters Jewish unbelief by observing, that the coming of the Messiah is represented in this passage, as distinguished by the abolition of sacrifices and ceremonies; by the accomplishment of the great body of Scripture prophecy, and by the perfect fulfilment of the will of God.

He disputes the perpetuity of the ceremonial law, from the depreciating language of Scripture respecting it, and from the fact of its having ceased to be observed. On this subject, he addresses the Jewish part of his audience in the following manner:

"In maintaining the perpetuity of the sacrifices and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, your writers are not only opposed by Scripture but by fact. Whether Messiah the prince be come or not, sacrifice and

oblation have ceased. We believe they *virtually* ceased when Jesus offered himself a sacrifice, and in a few years afterwards they *actually* ceased. Those of your nation who believed in Jesus, voluntarily, though gradually, ceased to offer them; and those who did not believe in him, were compelled to desist, by the destruction of their city and temple. You may adhere to a few of your ancient ceremonies; but it can only be like gathering round the ashes of the system; the substance of it is consumed. 'The sacrifices of the holy temple,' as one of your writers acknowledges, 'have ceased.'

"The amount is, whether Jesus be the Messiah or not, his appearance in the world has this character pertaining to it, that it was the period in which the sacrifice and the oblation actually ceased. And it is worthy of your serious inquiry, whether these things *can* be accomplished in any other than Jesus. Should Messiah the prince come at some future period, as your nation expects, how are the sacrifice and the oblation to cease on his appearance, when they have already ceased nearly eighteen hundred years? If therefore he be not come, he can never come, so as to answer this part of the Scripture account of him."

Under the second division, Mr. Fuller notices the prophecies concerning the time of the Messiah's advent, the place of his nativity, the family from which he should spring, the kind of miracles he should perform, his lowliness, death, resurrection, and rejection by his own countrymen. He then notices the striking fulfilment of these prophecies, supposing Jesus to be the Messiah, and insists on the impossibility of their being fulfilled at all on any other hypothesis. He afterwards proceeds to point out the full accomplishment of the divine will, both of precept and purpose, in the obedience of Christ. He refutes several objections which are current among the Jews; and concludes with a pressing appeal to their consciences, and an earnest exhortation to professed Christians to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. The whole sermon carries with it convincing evidence, that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God; and if it failed to produce its end and design, it would leave the unbelievers without excuse.

Sermons on various Subjects. 1814.

The Author's numerous active engagements, which called him frequently from home, and especially in his later years, left him but little time for retirement, prevented his writing any large work; and this, which was one of the last of his publications, was several years in compiling. Had it been otherwise, several more volumes of sermons, equally excellent with the present, might have been ex-

pected. The christian world, however, has reason to be thankful for the legacy which is left, enriched as it is with a maturity of thought, on subjects of the highest importance. Doctrinal, practical, and experimental divinity, are here blended in equal proportions, free from controversy, but full of point, and just discrimination.

The Sermons are sixteen in number, and on the following topics—Solitary Reflection, or the sinner directed to look into himself for conviction—Advice to the Dejected, or the soul directed to look out of itself for consolation—the Prayer of Faith, exemplified in the woman of Canaan—the future Perfection of the Church, contrasted with its present imperfections—the Gospel, the only effectual means of producing universal peace amongst mankind—the Reception of Christ, the turning point of salvation—on Justification—the Believer's Review of his past and present state—the Nature and Importance of Love to God—conformity to the Death of Christ—the Life of Christ the security and felicity of his church—Christianity the antidote to presumption and despair—the Sorrow attending wisdom and knowledge—the Magnitude of the heavenly inheritance.

Amidst such a variety, where each invites attention, the selection is difficult; but the sermons on Justification, while they are confessedly on a subject of pre-eminent importance, are distinguishable for perspicuity and closeness of reasoning. The last sermon, in particular, abounds with an originality of thought seldom to be met with, on one of the most difficult passages in the inspired volume. His attention was more immediately directed towards it, by a letter which he received from a highly respectable clergyman, who requested his thoughts upon the subject.

In ascertaining the meaning of the term *Justification*, Mr. Fuller distinguishes it from sanctification, and considers it as the opposite of condemnation; and though amongst men it is not only opposed to condemnation but even to pardon, yet in the justification of a sinner with God it is not so opposed, though distinguishable from it.

"From these dissimilarities, and others which might be pointed out, it must be evident to every thinking mind, that though there are certain points of likeness, sufficient to account for the use of the term, yet we are not to learn the scripture doctrine of justification from what is so called in the judicial proceedings of human courts, and in various particulars we cannot safely reason from one to the

other. The principal points of likeness respect not the *grounds* of the proceeding, but its *effects*. Believing in Jesus, we are united to him; and being so, are treated by the Judge of all as one with him; his obedience unto death is imputed to us, or reckoned as ours; and we for his sake are delivered from condemnation as though we had been innocent, and entitled to eternal life as though we had been perfectly obedient.

But let us farther inquire, *What is gospel justification?* Alluding to justification in a court of judicature, it has been common to speak of it as a sentence. This sentence has been considered by some divines, as passing—first, in the mind of God from eternity—second, on Christ and the elect considered in him when he rose from the dead—third, in the conscience of a sinner on his believing. Justification *by faith*, in the view of these divines, denotes either justification by Christ the object of faith, or the manifestation to the soul of what previously existed in the mind of God.

Others, who have been far from holding with justification as a decree in the divine mind, have yet seemed to consider it as a manifestation, impression, or persuasion in the human mind. They have spoken of themselves and others as being justified under such a sermon, or at such an hour; when all that they appear to mean is, that at such a time they had a strong impression or persuasion that they were justified."

The reply to these different hypotheses, is as follows—

"In respect to the first, it is true that justification, and every other spiritual blessing, was included in that purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but as the actual bestowment of other blessings supposes the existence of the party, so does justification. Christ was 'raised again for our justification,' in the same sense as he died for the pardon of our sins. Pardon and justification were *virtually* obtained by his death and resurrection; and to this may be added, our glorification was obtained by his ascension; for we were not only 'quickened together with him, and raised up together, but made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' But as this does not prove that we were from thence *actually* glorified, neither do the other prove that we were actually pardoned or justified.

Whatever justification is, the scriptures represent it as taking place on our *believing* in Christ. It is not any thing that belongs to predestination; but something that intervenes between that and glorification. 'Whom he did *predestinate*, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also *justified;* and whom he justified, them he also *glorified*.' That which the scriptures call justification is by faith in Christ Jesus; and is sometimes spoken of as future, which it could not be if it were before our actual existence. For example: 'Seeing it is one God who *shall* justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision by faith—Now it was not written for Abraham's sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it *shall be imputed*, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. The scriptures *foreseeing* that God *would justify* the heathen through faith, &c.' If justification were God's decree finally to acquit, condemnation must be his decree finally to condemn. But every unbeliever, whether elect or non-elect, is under condemnation, as the scriptures abundantly teach: condemnation, therefore, cannot be God's degree finally to condemn. Saul of Tarsus, while an unbe-

liever, was under condemnation; yet God had not appointed him to wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ. The sum is, neither condemnation nor justification consists in the secret purpose of God, but in his will as revealed or declared, as by a sentence in an open court.

And as justification is not a purpose in the divine mind, neither is it a manifestation to, an impression on, or a persuasion of, the human mind. That there are manifestations to believers, is admitted. God manifests himself unto them as he doth not unto the world. The things of God, which are hidden from the wise and prudent, are revealed to them. But these are not things which were previously locked up in the divine purposes, but things which were already revealed in the Scriptures, and which were previously hidden from them, as they still are from unbelievers, by their own criminal blindness. God does not reveal his secrect counsels to men otherwise than by fulfilling them. To pretend to a revelation or manifestation of that which is not contained in the Scriptures, is pretending to be inspired in the same extraordinary manner as were the prophets and apostles.

"If justification consists in a manifestation, impression, or persuasion that we are justified, condemnation must be a like impression or persuasion that we are condemned: but this is not true. The Jews who opposed Christ were under condemnation; yet so far from being impressed or persuaded of any such thing, they had no doubt but God was their Father. Believers in Jesus, on the other hand, may at times be impressed with strong apprehensions of divine wrath, while yet they are not exposed to it. Neither justification, therefore, nor condemnation, consists in the persuasion of the mind that we are under the one or the other. Besides, to make a thing consist in a persuasion of the truth of that thing, is palpable absurdity. There can be no well-grounded persuasion of the truth of any thing, unless it be true and evident, antecedently to our being persuaded of it."

Having cleared away these errors, which tended to involve the subject in a mist, the Author states justification to be a relative change, not in, or upon, but concerning us; that it consists in our standing acquitted by the revealed will of God, declared in the gospel; so that he whom the scriptures bless, is blessed, and he whom they curse, is cursed. The inquiry then amounts to this: "What is it in the redemption of Christ, to which the scriptures ascribe its efficacy—what concern faith has in our justification—and whether justification includes the pardon of our sins, past, present, and to come?" The answer to the last inquiry, is too important to be overlooked.

"That justification includes the pardon of sin, has already been proved, from Rom. iv. 6, 7: and seeing it is promised of him that believeth, that he 'shall not come into condemnation,' it must in some way secure the pardon of all his sins, and the possession of eternal life. Yet to speak of sins as being pardoned before they are repented of, or even committed, is not only to maintain that on which the Scriptures are silent, but to contradict the current language of their testi-

mony. If all our sins, past, present, and to come, were *actually* forgiven, either when Christ laid down his life, or even on our first believing, why did David speak of 'confessing his transgression,' and of God's 'forgiving his iniquity?' Why did Solomon teach us, that 'he who confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall find mercy?' Why did our Lord direct us in our daily prayers to say, 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors?' and why add, 'If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses?' Finally, why did the apostle John teach us, 'that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness?'

"Nor is it sufficient to understand this language of the *manifestation* of forgiveness to the mind. Forgiveness is not opposed to merely withholding the comforts of religion, but to 'laying our sins to our charge.' The parable of the servant who took his fellow-servant by the throat, and was delivered by his lord to the tormentors, is thus applied by our Saviour: 'So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.' This undoubtedly means more than withholding a sense of forgiveness in the present life. Nor is there any thing in all this inconsistent with the certain perseverance of true believers, or with the promise that 'they shall not come into condemnation.' The truth taught us in this promise is not, that if after believing in Christ, we live in sin, and die without repentance, we shall nevertheless escape condemnation; but that provision is made in behalf of believers, that they shall *not live in sin;* and when they sin, that they shall *not die without repentance,* but return to God, and so obtain forgiveness. The promise of non-condemnation includes that of repentance and perseverance. 'I will put my law in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.'"

The last sermon in this volume contains an explication of that difficult passage in Rom. viii. 18—23, which is discussed in three propositions.—1. Such is the magnitude of the glory to be revealed in us, that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with it.—2. Such is the magnitude of the glory, that its influence extends to the whole creation.—3. Its magnitude also is such, that those Christians who have possessed the highest enjoyments in this world, were not satisfied with them, but groaned within themselves, waiting for the possession of it.

For sound and original remark, for a deep insight into the sacred scriptures, and a clear and forcible statement of many of the leading points in the christian system, this volume of sermons would bear a comparison with any other that has appeared in the English language; though for elegance of diction, and diffusion of sentiment, it may easily be surpassed by writers of far inferior ability.

The style, however, is more polished than that of various other of the Author's performances, though it is occasion-

ally rugged, and generally inflexible; emitting light as through the bars of a grated window, and pouring down torrents of living water as from the sides of a craggy mountain.

The Principles and Prospects of a Servant of Christ: A Sermon delivered at the Funeral of the late Rev. John Sutcliffe, A. M., June 28, 1814: *with a Brief Memoir of the Deceased.*

After the closest intimacy between these two good men, in personal friendship, in ministerial and missionary labours, and which had never been interrupted for upwards of thirty years, it must have been no ordinary trial to the surviver to pronounce the funeral solemnities of his departed brother. Mr. Fuller, however, enters on the undertaking with that self-possession, for which he was ever remarkable; and in a tone of calm sensibility, he exhibits the foundation of a sinner's hope, places his beloved friend broadly upon it, directs his eyes to the cross, and describes him, during the whole of his course, as looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

The distinguishing quality of this sermon is its great simplicity: there are no bursts of feeling, few novelties of sentiment, no strong expressions. The tide of thought moves smoothly on, without any thing to impede or accelerate its progress. The preacher is calm, tender, and pathetic; evidently restrained by the dread of an unmerited eulogium, and chastened to the extreme of moderation. Feeling, as he always did, a strong aversion to the general strain of funeral orations, more fit for chapels where calendarian saints are registered, than for the meridian of a Protestant community, and suspecting himself of those partialities which a long-continued intimacy would impart, he carefully guards against the wanderings of imagination, confines himself to a few plain and simple truths, leaving scarcely any room for the expressions of ardent friendship.

The life of Mr. Sutcliffe furnished but few incidents for detail, and little occasion for an extended narrative. He was a man of plain sense, solid piety, and of puritanic behaviour; but not greatly distinguished for his talents or acquirements. He had read much divinity, possessed considerable discernment in casuistical cases, and was an able counsellor, but deficient in general information and literary taste. In the acquisition of learning he was plod-

ding and industrious, a great economist of time, and studious of frugality in every department. Such was his uniform circumspection, that he seldom spoke unadvisedly with his lips, and was never known to deviate from the strictest honour and integrity. The whole tenor of his life was calm and unruffled, exempt from extraordinary trials, and exhibiting a scene of placid piety. He discovered more candour, greater tenderness in judging of character, than his superior friend; had fewer prejudices, and less suspicion of human nature. There was a natural asperity in his temper, which religion had greatly softened; but very little of that urbanity, or spontaneous benevolence which gives the charm to social intercourse, and embellishment to character. His mental faculties were plain and strong, but not versatile in their application; his moral qualities were of solid worth, but neither brilliant nor alluring. In labours the most arduous and important, he was Mr. Fuller's friend and associate; they acted together with the greatest harmony, and their varied talents were alike consecrated to the mission, and the public interests of religion. If one was more fitted to preside in council, the other was prepared to take the field, and to do exploits; and while Moses could answer all the hard questions, Aaron bore the censer, and was the saint of the Lord. Mr. Sutcliffe was a man of deep devotion, of consummate prudence, and unsullied fame; and Mr. Fuller having performed the last act of friendship, in the last sermon he ever published, soon follows him to the house appointed for all living. So much harmony in life and in death, was highly honourable to their characters, and leaves a fragrance upon their memory.

Brief Narrative of the Baptist Mission in India.

Nearly all the Periodical Accounts of the Society were compiled by their able Secretary, from the letters and journals transmitted by the missionaries; but as this increasing compilation soon became too ponderous and expensive for general distribution, it was found necessary, in order to give a wider circulation to the missionary intelligence, to compress the whole into a small pamphlet. This acceptable service was performed by Mr. Fuller, in his "Brief Narrative," which produced important advantages to the mission.

Its origin is here traced with greater accuracy and minuteness than in any former publication, and the succeeding events are stated with singular precision and fidelity. The whole of the subject was so familiar to the writer, that, perhaps, no other person could have condensed such a quantity of intelligence into so small a compass.

Having in a former chapter of these Memoirs traced an outline of the origin of the mission, it is unnecessary to repeat it in this place; but it may not be altogether impertinent to remark, that important as it has now become, the mission to India was at first generally regarded as chimerical, and but few thought it a matter of duty. Speaking of it upon one occasion, Mr. Fuller remarked, that "some of our ministers considered the plan to be like a proposal to make a turnpike road to the moon." He added, "I acknowledge that I also said in effect, If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might this thing be." But he soon entered heartily into the measure.

Besides these various publications by Mr. Fuller, chiefly on doctrinal and practical subjects, he edited a work formerly published by an American lady, under the title of

A View of Religions: By Hannah Adams. A new edition, with corrections and additions. To which is prefixed an Essay on Truth.

The introduction, by the American author, presents a concise but comprehensive view of the state of religion and philosophy at the time of our Lord's appearance. The First Part of the work comprises an alphabetical compendium, not only of the denominations existing among Christians in the present age, but also of the several divisions and heresies that have appeared since the earliest times of Christianity. The Second Part contains a brief description of Paganism, Mahomedism, Judaism and Deism. The Third exhibits an account of the religions that now prevail, among the different nations of the earth.

Many of the articles in the latter part are miserably defective, while those of the first are equally redundant. Only six or seven lines each are devoted to the history of religion in Ireland, and in Wales, while ten times the same quantity of letter press is given in descriptions of several

forgotten religionists and heretics, who perished from the earth a thousand years ago. On the article, Church of England, eight whole lines are bestowed; and on the Mahometans, nearly as many pages! The work, which affords a quantity of valuable materials, might have been rendered useful, in the hands of a careful editor, who had more time at command than Mr. Fuller could afford to bestow upon it; but in its present state, it is disfigured by so many anomalies, as to be entitled to very slender commendation.*

But whatever be its defects, they are not properly imputable to the English editor; as the utmost that he engaged for, was to 'correct' some errors which the American writer had committed, with respect to the English denominations, and to make some 'additions' to those articles which chiefly related to the same subject, without at all interfering with the general plan of the work. Mr. Fuller accordingly inserted a fresh account of the Calvinists, Baptists,† Friends or Quakers, Methodists, Moravians, and several others; some of which had not only been imperfectly stated in the American edition of this work, but grossly misrepresented in Mr. Evans's Sketch of the different denominations.

The Essay on Truth, (a page of which was omitted by the carelessness of the compositor, and since inserted in a recent edition, with the parade of 'corrections and additions,') exhibits all the characteristic qualities of Mr. Fuller's other writings. It embraces three principal inquiries, suggested by the work itself, and tending to relieve those perplexities which the perusal of such a multitude of discordant sentiments would naturally occasion.

After examining the first question—"What is truth?"—and pointing out some of its distinctive properties, Mr. Fuller observes,

"If language have any determinate meaning, it is plainly taught us in the Scriptures, that mankind are not only sinners, but in a lost and perishing condition, without help or hope, but what arises from the free grace of God through the atonement; that Christ died as our substitute; that we are forgiven and accepted only for the sake of what he hath done and suffered; that in his person and work, all evangelical truth concentrates; that the doctrine of salvation for the

* A new and improved edition of this work has since been published by Mr. Thomas Williams, the Author of several valuable publications.

† Both these were written by Mr. Fuller himself. The following article was drawn up by Mr. Bevan, at that time connected with the Society of Friends.

chief of sinners through his death, was so familiar in the primitive times as to become a kind of Christian proverb, or 'saying;' that on our receiving and retailing this, depends our present standing and final salvation. When this doctrine is received in the true spirit of it —which it never is but by a sinner ready to perish—all those fruitless speculations, which tend only to bewilder the mind, will be laid aside; just as malice, guile, and envies, and evil speakings, are laid aside by him who is born of God.

"True religion is with great beauty and propriety called 'walking in the truth.' A life of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness, is Christian principle reduced to practice. Truth is a system of love, an overflow of divine blessedness, as is intimated by its being called 'the glorious gospel of the blessed God;' a system of reconciliation, peace, and forgiveness; full of the most amazing condescension, and of spotless rectitude. To walk in truth like this, is to walk in love; to be tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us; to be of the same mind with him who made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant; and to be holy in all manner of conversation."

To the second inquiry—"How is it to be accounted for, that there should be so many *diversities and contradictions among Christians*, both in regard to sentiments and modes of worship"—the answer is:

"That there is an important difference between *diversity* and *contrariety*. The former belongs to men as men, which the latter does not. One man comprehends more of truth, another less; this has a talent for discovering one part of truth, and that another. But in all this there is nothing *discordant*, any more than in a diversity of features, or in the variegated face of the earth, which abound in divers kinds of flowers, every one of which contributes to the beauty of the whole. It is not so with respect to truth and error, which are as opposite as right and wrong. True doctrines are the plants, and false doctrines the weeds of the church. They cannot both flourish in the same mind. The one must be rooted up, or the other will be overrun, and rendered unproductive. The causes which the Scriptures assign for the corruption of Christian doctrine are principally, if not entirely, of a *moral* nature. They represent evangelical truth as a holy doctrine, and as that which cannot be understood by an unholy mind. An unrenewed person, whatever be his education, talents, or natural temper, can never fall in with Christianity, as it is taught in the New Testament."

The answer to the third question—"*Why is error permitted*"—is equally clear and satisfactory:

"This is an awful subject; and if we were left to our own conjectures upon it, it would be our wisdom to leave it to the great day, when all things will be made manifest; but we are not. The evidence in favour of true religion is sufficient for a candid mind, but not for one that is disposed to cavil. If we attend to it simply to find out truth, and obey it, we shall not be disappointed: but if our souls be lifted up within us, the very rock of salvation will be to us a stone of stumbling.

"The visible kingdom of Christ is a floor containing a mixture of wheat and chaff; and every false doctrine is a wind, which he whose fan is in his hand, makes use of to purge it. There is a great number of characters who profess to receive the truth, on whom, notwithstanding, it never sat easily. Its holy and humbling nature galls their spirits. In such cases the mind is prepared to receive any representation of the gospel, however fallacious, that may comport with its desires; and being thus averse to truth, God frequently in just judgment suffers the wind of false doctrine to sweep them away.

"There is a way of viewing the corruption and depravity of mankind, so as to excite bitterness and wrath, and every species of evil temper; and there is a way of viewing them, that, without approving or conniving at what is wrong, shall excite the tear of compassion. It does not become us to declaim against the wickedness of the wicked in a manner as if we expected grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles: but while we prove ourselves the decided friends of God, to bear good-will to men. It becomes those who may be the most firmly established in the truth as it is in Jesus, to consider that a portion of the errors of the age, in all probability, attaches to them; and though it were otherwise, yet they are directed to carry it benevolently towards others who may err: 'In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God, peradventure, will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth.'

"There is an important difference between razing the foundation, and building upon that foundation a portion of wood, and hay, and stubble. It becomes us not to make light of either: but the latter may be an object of forbearance, whereas the former is not. With the enemies of Christ, we ought, in religious matters, to make no terms; but towards his friends, though in some respects erroneous, it behoves us to come as near as it is possible to do, without a dereliction of principle. A truly Christian spirit will feel the force of such language as the following, and will act upon it: 'All that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours, grace be unto them, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ—Grace be with them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.'"

The sentiments contained in these brief extracts cannot fail to meet the approbation of the sincere and enlightened believer; and a happy combination of charity and christian zeal is conspicuous throughout the whole of this valuable Essay.

Expository Discourses on the Apocalypse, interspersed with Practical Reflections. 1815.

This posthumous publication, consisting of thirty-one discourses, delivered in 1809 and 1810, after undergoing several revisions, was finished by the Author within six weeks of his death, and of course contains his mature thoughts on the most mysterious part of sacred prophecy. There is, however, but little novelty in the work, but little

to gratify the anxious curiosity of the age, or to elucidate the unfulfilled and more difficult parts of the Revelation. The general outline of the prophetic scheme is boldly sketched, and its various ramifications are marked with that precision which was common to the writer; but in general there is an extreme of modesty and diffidence, with scarcely any attempts to pass the usual boundaries of thought on these subjects, or any adventurous flight of speculation. The plan of the work differs in some respects from that of Lowman and Newton, while it embraces their views of the Eastern church and the Ottoman empire, with the exception of making Mahomet the 'false prophet' of the apocalypse; yet whether it be owing to the condensity of these discourses, or the singular perspicuity of the writer, so that what was intricate becomes familiar in his hands, the whole assumes an interesting form, and there is not a line but what is intelligible to the plainest reader; which is not commonly the case with commentaries on this mysterious book, for they often leave us more perplexed than we were before. Little notice is taken of the celebrated performances of Mr. Faber, except to rectify a few of his mistakes; and none at all of a certain popular writer on prophecy, whom Mr. Fuller used to denominate "the Fortune-teller of the church," except to intimate that in the delirium which prevailed a few years ago, some ridiculous attempts were made at interpreting prophecy with a view of establishing a political hypothesis. It must be acknowledged, however, that Mr. Bicheno's writings contain a great deal of useful information, especially on the subject of the Eastern Antichrist, and that they interested the attention of a larger portion of the christian world, than those of his successors in the same department.

Mr. Fuller seems fully aware of the difficulty attending his undertaking, but found encouragement to pursue his inquiries, from the blessing promised to those who 'read, and hear, and keep the words' of this prophecy, which he considers as analogous to the cloudy pillar in the wilderness, guiding the New-testament saints through the labyrinths of antichristian errors and corruptions.

His remarks on the Epistles to the Seven Asiatic Churches are brief, but full of point, and abounding with important discriminations. The reader is struck with the admirable use that is made of scripture phraseology, in adapting it to character and circumstances, though it is no other than the usual manner of the writer. Contrary to

the general current of exposition, these Epistles are not considered as predicting the state of christianity at so many future periods, symbolizing with that of the seven churches; but as descriptive of the actual state of the christian profession in the Apostle's time, and designed to furnish encouragements, reproofs, warnings, and counsels, to other churches and individuals, in all future ages, as their cases may require. Some important observations occur on the subject of brotherly admonition, which ought never to be forgotten, though they have little more than a theoretical existence. The character of the Son of God, in addressing the seven churches, is given with great effect, and ought to be considered as the model of all christian pastors; blending commendation with reproof, and the tenderest compassion and forbearance with the most inviolable love of righteousness.

The introductory vision to the opening of the sealed book, in chap. vi. is peculiarly grand and affecting; and there is a majesty and simplicity in the style and manner of the writer which comport with the nature of the subject. The exposition of the symbolical prophecy, though not original, is very satisfactory, and developes the basis on which the subsequent remarks are founded.

"We are not to conceive of the seals," says Mr. Fuller, "as containing one series of events, the trumpets another, and the vials another; but as being all included in the seals: for the seven trumpets are only subdivisions of the seventh seal, and the seven vials of the seventh trumpet—This division into seals, and subdivision into trumpets and vials, appears to be the only one which the prophecy requires, or even admits. Not to mention its division into chapters, which are sometimes made in the midst of a subject, the scheme of dividing it into periods, which Mr. Lowman and many others have favoured, seems to be merely a work of the imagination. There are doubtless some remarkable periods in the prophecy, such as that of the twelve hundred and sixty years, &c. But to make them *seven* in number, and for this purpose to reckon the day of judgment, and the heavenly state, as periods, is fanciful. It is by the division of the prophecy itself into seals, and the subdivision of the seventh seal into trumpets, and of the seventh trumpet into vials, that we must steer our course."

Contrary also to the scheme of Mr. Lowman and others, who considered the opening of the first seal as not taking place till after the death of John, Mr. Fuller offers good reasons for concluding that it should be dated from the ascension of Christ; and by considering the visions of John as retrospecting to the commencement of the chris-

tian dispensation, the sealed book is made to contain a perfect system of New-testament prophecy, from the time of the ascension to the final end of all things. By this means also we are furnished with an easy interpretation of the division of the book, into 'things which the sacred writer *had seen*, things which *were*, and things which should be *hereafter*.'

Assuming this obvious principle of interpretation, the first *six* seals are supposed to include the principal events of the first three hundred years, or to the commencement of the reign of Constantine. The *seventh* seal, which includes the trumpets and the vials, extends from that period to the end of the world. The first four trumpets under the seventh seal, relate to the subversion of the papal Roman empire; and the last three, which are wo trumpets, to its final dissolution.

Chapter xi. of the Revelation is considered as giving a general representation of this corrupt and persecuting power, with the state of the Christian church under it, during the 1260 years. Chapter xii. gives a second, and Chapters xiii. and xiv. a third general representation of it during the same period. Chapters xv. and xvi. give a more particular account of that part of the subject which commences at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and contains a subdivision of that trumpet into seven vials, the pouring out of which brings us down to the Millennium. Chapters xvii. xviii. and xix. contain what in modern publications would be called *Notes of Illustration*, giving particular accounts of things which before had only been generally intimated. Such is Mr. Fuller's general distribution of the prophecy.

The Slaying of the Witnesses, concerning which, so much has been written to little purpose, he considers as having taken place *before* the Reformation; though he does not relieve us from the dread of some future persecution. The former of these events took place, as the writer supposes, on the suppression of the Bohemians; after which, no society of Christians was to be found for nearly a hundred years, who dared to oppose the general corruption; and that the resurrection of the Witnesses, and their ascension to heaven, took place at the time of the Reformation, when, by a special providence, the parties concerned in it were placed out of the reach of their enemies. The prospect of another popish persecution, after the *second*

flight of the church into the wilderness, which few commentators have noticed, is thus described:

"From the times of the Reformation, the church of Christ had in a manner come out of the wilderness. Having obtained a degree of legal protection in several nations, its members were not obliged as heretofore to retire into woods and mountains and caves, nor to have recourse to midnight assemblies for the purpose of hearing the gospel: but after renewed persecutions, the woman is obliged a *second time* to fly into the wilderness, as to her wonted place of refuge. Such has been the state of Protestants in all Popish countries; such has been their state in France, from the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1685, to the revolution in 1789, though of late they were treated with less severity than formerly, being allowed to meet in the day time, only under military inspection. Nor was it in *Popish* countries only that the wrath of the dragon vented itself. A portion of the poison of a persecuting spirit was found among Protestants, even in our own country, from the reformation to the revolution of 1688. If one place was more distinguished than another, as affording a shelter for the woman at the time of this her *second flight*, I suspect it was NORTH AMERICA;* where the church of Christ has been nourished, and may continue to be nourished, during the remainder of the 1260 years. And as to those parts of the church which still exist in a state of insecurity, the serpent has not been suffered to make a full end of them: they are nourished by the word of God, and shall doubtless survive the reign of antichristian corruption and persecution.

"The flood of waters cast after the woman by the dragon, and the war made on the remnant of her seed, referring, as it appears, to the latter end of the 1260 years, may be something *yet to come*. It is not impossible that persecution may yet be revived. The antichristian cause can hardly be supposed to expire without some deadly struggles. Indeed it is in the very act of 'making war on Him that sitteth upon the horse, and his army, that the beast and the false prophet will be taken;' and which seems to be the same war which is made with the 'remnant of the woman's seed.'—Should a flood of persecution yet be in reserve for the church of Christ, it may be the last effort of an expiring foe; and from that, *the earth* will preserve her, by swallowing it up; it may be in some such way as the invasion of the Philistines preserved David; or as political struggles have often proved favourable to Christians, by furnishing those who wished to persecute them with other employment. The dragon, provoked by his want of success against the woman, may vent his malice on the remnant of her seed that are within his reach: but his time is short. His agents, 'the beast and the false prophet,' will soon be taken; and the Angel, with a great chain in his hand, shall next lay hold on *him*, and cast him into the bottomless pit."

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* Should this conjecture be well founded, it may possibly account for the singular mercy vouchsafed to the churches on the western continent, where, during the last twenty-five years, while Europe has been deluged with blood, remarkable revivals in religion have taken place, and the Spirit has been poured out from on high. The same hand which has been punishing the enemies of the church, has been rewarding the inhabitants of the wilderness, who nourished her in the day of her calamity. *Editor.*

On the Name of the Beast, and the number of his name in Rev. xiii. 18, a passage which has puzzled all the commentators, Mr. Fuller gives no additional light; but offers the stale common-place exposition of an abracadabra.

The first prediction which the writer meets with, as applicable to *the present times*, is that which describes an 'angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people; which he thinks is fulfilling in the zeal which has been kindled of late years to carry the gospel among the heathen, both by Missionary and Bible Societies; an object not unworthy of a place in prophecy.

Every one will feel anxious to know what were the sentiments of this discerning writer on the subject of the pouring out of the Seven Vials, in Rev. xvi.; and many will be disappointed to find, that instead of five or six, as is commonly supposed, only the first two are poured out; and that no less a space than a hundred and fifty years is allowed for these vials of wrath, commencing from the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789. This leaves a dismal prospect, for at least three or four generations to come; during which time, Europe is still to be an acelda-ma! The exposition is briefly as follows:

"It is a fact very remarkable, that the seven trumpets have each a point of resemblance with the seven vials. For example: the first trumpet affected the *earth;* and so does the first vial. The second trumpet turned *the sea into blood*; and the second vial was poured out upon the sea, which became as the blood of a dead man. The third trumpet affected *the rivers and fountains of waters;* and so does the third vial. The fourth trumpet affected *the sun;* and the fourth vial does the same. The fifth trumpet was followed by *darkness and pain;* and such are the effects of the fifth vial. The sixth trumpet was complex, relating partly to the depredations of the Euphratean horsemen in the east, and partly to the idolatries and persecutions of the beast and his associates in the west; and so is the sixth vial; relating partly to the Euphratean waters being dried up, and partly to the battle of Armageddon, by which the cause of the beast will be ruined. Finally: the seventh trumpet presents a *closing scene;* and so does the seventh vial.* These resemblances cannot be accidental. Though they refer to events, therefore, more than a thousand years distant from each other, yet there must be some important points of likeness between them; and as the trumpets are all fulfilled, except the last, we may by means of them form some judgment of the vials which may yet be unfulfilled."

* Compare Rev. ix. 1, 3, with xvi. 10. Chap. ix. 14—xi. 14, with xvi. 12—16. Chap. xi. 15, with xvi. 17.

After quoting the sentiments of Dr. Gill, who gave a similar exposition of the vials, in 1752, Mr. Fuller proceeds with the text:

"'And the first angel went, and poured out his vial upon *the earth.*' If by the earth be meant the *continent*, as France and Germany, especially the latter, we have certainly seen a succession of evils falling upon the men who 'had the mark of the beast;' first in France, and after that in Germany, grievous as the 'most noisome sores,' and like them indicative of a state of corruption and approaching dissolution.

"'And the second angel poured out his vial upon *the sea.*' If this vial respect the papal *maritime* nations, particularly Spain and Portugal, we have seen a commencement of things in those countries, but have not yet seen the issue. What it will be God knoweth! Whether this or that political party prevail, it will be a plague, and a plague that will tend to accomplish the ruin of the antichristian cause.

"'And the third angel poured out his vial upon *the rivers and fountains of waters.*' If these denote Italy and Savoy, these counties may be expected to be the scene of the *next* great convulsions which shall agitate Europe. And if it be so, it may be a just retribution for the blood of the Waldenses, which was there shed in shocking profusion, for many successive centuries.

"'And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon *the sun.*' By the sun is undoubtedly to be understood the supreme secular government of what is called the *holy Roman empire*, which is denominated the *beast*, and distinguished by its carrying or supporting the harlot. Its scorching heat cannot be understood of the persecution of the faithful; for they would not blaspheme under it. It seems therefore to denote the galling tyranny by which the adherents of the beast will be oppressed, while yet they repent not of their deeds.

"'And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon *the seat of the beast.*' By the beast we have all along understood that secular government which, at the head of the other European governments, has supported the Papal Antichrist. This certainly has not been the imperial government of France, but of Germany, to which therefore the character of the *beast* belongs. The supporters of the Papal cause will eventually be confounded: darkness and anguish will come upon them. Yet being given up, like Pharaoh, to hardness of heart, they will continue to blaspheme the God of heaven, and will not repent of their deeds. These blasphemies, and this perseverance in impenitence are sure signs of its being the determination of Heaven to destroy them. Individuals may repent and escape; but as a community they are appointed to utter destruction.

"'And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon *the great river Euphrates.*' This vial, so far as respects the temporal dominion of Christ's enemies, possesses a final character; and seems partly to respect the overthrow of the Turkish power, signified by the 'drying up of the Euphrates,' and partly that of the Papal, signified by the battle of 'Armageddon.' The second part of this vial is the most tremendous. This is the last struggle of the beast and his adherents, and which will issue in their utter ruin. This is 'the great day of God Almighty;' the same as the harvest and the vintage in chapter xiv. and the taking of the beast and the false prophet, in chapter xix.

"'And the seventh angel poured out his vial into *the air*.' The moral atmosphere of the world has long been polluted by false religion, from which it is the object of this vial to cleanse it as by a thunder storm; which thunder storm produces a great earthquake, and this the falling to pieces of the great antichristian city and other cities with it. The face of the world from hence becomes changed; and the wrath of God pursues, as by a terrible hail storm, the men who repent not of their deeds. And now a voice out of the temple of heaven, even from the throne of God is heard, saying, IT IS DONE! The threatening of the angel in chapter x. 7, is accomplished—the 1260 years are ended—THE MYSTERY OF GOD IS FINISHED—and now commences the Millennium!"

CHAPTER IX.

Review of the Controversy on Faith, with Brief Notices of Mr. Fuller's several Opponents—Rev. William Button—Rev. Dan Taylor—Rev. John Martin—Advocates of Hyper-calvinism—Rev. Archibald Maclean.

THE distinction which Mr. Fuller acquired among the theological writers of the day, arose chiefly from the talent which he displayed in controversy; for though his other writings were generally well received, and obtained an extensive circulation, yet in this department he particularly excelled. He was sometimes weary of disputation, and wished to decline it; but when the interests of truth invited him to the field, he seldom quitted it but with honour and success. He carefully took his station in some fixed, invulnerable principle, whence he annoyed the adversary, and bid defiance to his attacks. His understanding was not more powerful than rapid in its exercise, grasping a subject almost intuitively, and fixing on the point of an argument with singular precision and accuracy. As the talents of his opponents were various, and the subjects in debate more or less interesting, his polemical pieces of course possess different degrees of merit; and where the host was feeble, the conquest though decisive could not be eminent.

With respect to the present controversy, though it related more immediately to one particular class of Christians, it was pregnant with great practical results, and fully demanded by existing circumstances. At the time Mr. Fuller commenced a public profession of Christianity, and

entered on the work of the ministry, the state of the Baptist denomination in this country was truly deplorable. The writings of Hussey, Gill, and Brine,* were all in vogue: and such was the veneration in which their names were generally held, that the system of doctrine which they contended for, almost universally prevailed; and *their* works, not the scriptures, became in effect the standard of orthodoxy. It is not affirmed, that there is nothing valuable in the writings of these authors; on the contrary it is readily admitted, that all the leading truths of the gospel are maintained in them. At the same time, it is manifest,

* The following remarks from the pen of Mr. Fuller himself, relative to this point, deserves insertion here.

"I believe no writer of eminence can be named before the present century, who denied it to be the duty of men in general to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of their souls. I think Mr. *Hussey* was the first person, who by the general tenor of his writings laid the foundation for this sentiment. And yet even Mr. Hussey did not, that I recollect, expressly avow it. On the contrary, he allowed it to be 'the *duty* of those who were not effectually called, to *hear spiritually, and open their hearts to Christ;* though, as he justly asserted, the preaching of this as their duty would not effect a *cure.*' *Operations of Grace*, p. 442.

"Mr. Hussey was doubtless a man of considerable eminence in some respects. Mr. Beart, in his *Eternal Law and Everlasting Gospel*, I think has given as fair and as candid an account of his writings as could well be given. But Mr. Hussey, though in some respects a great man, was nevertheless possessed of that warm turn of mind, which frequently misleads even the greatest of men, especially in defending a favourite sentiment.

"Mr. Brine is the only writer of eminence who has expressly defended the sentiment. Dr. Gill took no active part in the controversy. It is allowed that the negative side of the question was his avowed sentiment, and this appears to be implied in the general tenor of his writings. At the same time it cannot be denied, that when engaged in other controversies, he frequently argued in a manner favourable to our side; and his writings contain various concessions on this subject, which if any one else had made them, would not be much to the satisfaction of our opposing brethren. However they may be inclined to represent us as verging towards Arminianism, it is certain Dr. Gill in his answer to Dr. Whitby, the noted Arminian, frequently makes use of our arguments; nor could he easily have gone through that work without them. (See his Cause of God and Truth, Part i. pp. 63, 69, 118, 159, 160, 165. Part ii. pp. 88, 211, 215, 222, 226. First edition.) And the very title of Mr. Brine's chief pamphlet against our sentiment, which he called, *Motives to Love and Unity among* Calvinists *differing in opinion*, as well as the most explicit acknowledgments therein contained, might teach those who pay any deference to his judgment, not to claim to themselves the title of Calvinists, exclusively." *Defence of a Treatise, entitled, The Gospel of Christ worthy of all Acceptation*, pp. 13, 14.

that by stretching what are usually called the doctrines of grace, beyond the scripture medium, they introduced a system of *Hyper*-Calvinism, which extended its baleful influence over nearly all the churches, and covered them with a cloud of darkness.

"From the moral inability which the oracles of truth ascribe to man in his fallen state, these divines were induced to divide moral and religious duties into two classes, natural and spiritual; comprehending under the latter, those which required spiritual or supernatural assistance to their performance; and under the former, those which demand no such assistance. Agreeable to this distinction, they conceived it to be the duty of all men to abstain from the outward acts of sin, to read the scriptures, to frequent the worship of God, and to attend, with serious assiduity, to the means of grace; but they supposed that repentance, faith in Christ, and the exercise of genuine internal devotion, were obligatory only on the regenerate. Hence their ministry consisted almost entirely of an exhibition of the peculiar mysteries of the gospel, with few or no addresses to the unconverted. They conceived themselves not warranted to urge them to repent and believe the gospel, those being spiritual duties, from whose obligation they were released by the inability contracted by the fall."*

As a necessary consequence, the calls and invitations of the gospel were entirely overlooked; the scriptural view of saving faith, as consisting in the cordial reception of the record that God hath given of his Son, exchanged for the doctrine of appropriation; and the duty of man to believe whatever God reveals, totally denied. Nothing was now to be heard but the privileges of believers, or rather the privileges of those who had wrought themselves up to an assurance that they were of the number of the elect; and all attempts to call sinners to the obedience of faith, were stigmatized as savouring of Arminian legality.

The reflecting mind of Mr. Fuller was struck with this heterogeneous mixture of truth and error, and more especially when he contemplated its pernicious effects upon the churches. Like the chilling touch of the torpedo, it

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* *Help to Zion's Travellers:* a new edition, by Rev. Robert Hall: p. xix. Preface.

seemed to paralyze every arm that came in contact with it.

It was Mr. Fuller's misfortune, however, to have been initiated in these sentiments; and he afterwards lamented, as we have seen in the early part of his history, that he had long been kept in distress and darkness for want of clearer views of the nature of faith, and from having sat under a ministry which disavowed all direct addresses to the unconverted. For a time also his own preaching was greatly deficient in this article; and though he did not wholly refrain from such addresses, he sensibly felt their inconsistency with the notions entertained of human inability. He began to discern, that love was the fulfilling of the law; and that, in fact, men owed nothing to their Creator, or to one another, which is not comprehended in the exercise of love. He perceived that every thing short of the perfection of love, constituted men sinners; and that though depraved, we are as capable, if we were but inclined, to bestow our hearts upon God as upon the things of this world. He anticipated the effects which these views, if he should become confirmed in them, must produce on the strain of his preaching, and, therefore, moved on with slow and trembling steps.

It was a great injury to him, at this early period of his ministry, that his attention was diverted to other subjects of far inferior importance. The writings of Mr. Johnson of Liverpool were recommended to his notice, as well as some others on speculative points. The style of that author, he used to say, seemed to him then, very imposing, and much calculated to carry away young and inexperienced readers. His professed purpose to vindicate the Creator from being the author of sin, greatly prepossessed Mr. Fuller in favour of his opinions; but he soon found them destitute of scriptural authority. He saw, that as the grace manifested by Christ Jesus proceeded on the ground of the entrance of sin, and was purposed before the world began, that the permission of sin must also be the subject of divine determination; and as sin has in fact entered, prevailed, and reigned upon earth, he was satisfied that it could be no reproach to the holy Majesty of heaven and earth, decretively to permit what has actually taken place. The inconsistency with the divine perfections, if any there were, he perceived must be in permitting evil to exist, and not in his decree to do so: and he was

afraid that Mr. Johnson's hypothesis rather arraigned than justified the ways of God to men. He thought he discovered that Mr. Johnson, and those who adopted his views, were misled by the ambiguity of the word *permit*, which denotes not merely "not to obstruct, without implying approbation;" but also "to give leave," in a different sense. These questions being put to rest in his mind, he henceforth thought little more about them; but in reviewing his experience, he saw reason to bless God for preserving him from the idle and unprofitable employment in which others were engrossed, and from the pernicious effects which he observed these and similar things to have on some Christians.

Had the mind of Mr. Fuller been only of an ordinary cast, he would probably have remained much longer, if not throughout the remainder of his life, perplexed and bewildered amidst these jarring elements of theological contest. But happy for himself and for the Christian world, he burst asunder the enslaving fetters of human dogmas, emancipated himself from their paralyzing influence on his researches after truth; and taking the word of God alone for his guide, he determined to call no man master upon earth, but to follow with a firm and cautious step, the dictates of an enlightened understanding.

In the year 1781, at the age of twenty-six, he composed his first treatise, which was published about five years afterwards, entitled—

The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation; or the Duty of Sinners to believe in Jesus Christ.

The leading design of this performance is to prove, that men are under indispensable obligations to believe whatever God says, and to do whatever he commands; and a Saviour being revealed in the gospel, the law in effect requires those to whom he is made known, to believe in him, seeing it insists upon obedience to the whole revealed will of God: That no rational creature can justly claim exemption from obligation, or is at liberty to do what he pleases, to believe or not believe what God declares, to comply or not comply with what he enjoins; otherwise he would not be called to give account of himself to God; that the inability of man to comply with the divine requirements is wholly of a moral nature, and totally distinct from the

want of natural faculties; that it consists in the prevalence of an evil disposition, or in blindness and hardness of heart; that though, while this disordered state of mind exists, it will prevent a compliance with the divine requirements as certainly as any physical privation, yet being voluntary, it becomes in the highest degree criminal;—and that legitimate commands, enforced by proper sanctions, being amongst the strongest motives, and tending in their own nature to incline the will, they cannot be withheld, without virtually relinquishing the claim of divine authority and dominion.

These sentiments are discussed in several distinct propositions, and supported by a weight of scriptural evidence, sufficient to silence all objections. The author then adverts to the doctrine of divine decrees—the nature of man's original holiness—particular redemption—the covenant of works—the inability of man—and the necessity of a divine principle in order to believing; proving the consistency of the indefinite calls of the gospel, with these and other admitted parts of the Calvinistic system.

Great opposition, however, was made to this publication at its first appearance, from various quarters; and the author himself was regarded with suspicion among several of his friends. In fact, so blind was the enmity directed against him, that one of the churches in his own neighbourhood refused for seven years to hold communion with him, or to allow any of their members to have fellowship with his church. The Dissenters in general, notwithstanding, and the Baptists in particular, are under great obligations to his memory, for his faithful and persevering exertions, in emancipating them from the servility of such a system as that already described, and giving free scope to the publication of the gospel. A considerable revolution has in consequence taken place in the sentiments of the Baptist denomination, and a greater relish excited for spiritual and practical religion. A wider separation has been made between real and nominal Christians of the same community; between Antinomian Calvinists and Calvinistic believers; while a closer union has been effected amongst the genuine friends of evangelical truth. "The excrescences of Calvinism have been cut off; the points of defence have been diminished in number, and better fortified; truth has shone forth with brighter lustre; and the ministry of the gospel been rendered more simple, more practical, and more efficacious."

But as truth is slow in its process, and the reformation of public bodies is generally effected with great difficulty, it was not to be expected that such an innovation upon the system which had prevailed for more than half a century, would be suffered to pass unnoticed. The book must be answered: or Calvinism, it was thought, would be ruined. The first opponent who presented himself, and to whom, as one of the successors of Dr. Gill, the conservation of reputed orthodoxy properly belonged, was

THE REV. WILLIAM BUTTON,

Pastor of the Baptist church, meeting in Dean-street, Borough. This gentleman published "Remarks" on Mr. Fuller's performance, in refutation of its leading sentiment; which simply related to the nature of saving faith, and its obligations on fallen men.

In managing this dispute, Mr. Button admits, what indeed no sober friend to revelation could deny, "that every man is bound cordially to receive, and heartily to approve of the gospel;" but then he imagines there is something in saving faith very distinct from this, though he does not contend for appropriation as essential to its existence. Rejecting Mr. Fuller's definition, as deficient, he wishes to substitute for "a belief of the truth," *a reliance on Christ for salvation*, and to include both *cause* and *effect* in the nature of true believing. He appears to lay much stress on the distinction between believing the divine testimony, and believing *in* or *on* Christ for salvation; though it is well known that this phrase is sometimes expressive of an essentially defective and temporary faith.* It is true, that to believe the apostles is not the same thing as to believe *on* them, because the apostles did not preach themselves; but as Christ is the subject of his own testimony, to believe him, and to believe on him, are expressions of the same import, and are used indiscriminately, the one for the other. John iii. 36.

This kind of special faith, however, Mr. Button does not consider as obligatory on all men, but that only which consists in giving credit to the word, and which requires no spiritual principle or supernatural assistance in order to its performance. In proof of this he offers copious extracts

*John ii. 23, 24. Chap. viii. 30—33.

from the commentary of Dr. Gill, on the various scriptures urged on the other side, and leaves Mr. Fuller's arguments to shift for themselves. The evidence in favour of faith being commanded in the scriptures, is all disposed of with the utmost ease, and without the labour of an argument. Commands, Mr. Button affirms, do not always imply duty. He is of opinion they are sometimes used to denote an extraordinary exertion of divine power, as when God said to the Israelitish nation, "live;" and sometimes they are simply intended to afford direction and encouragement. Applying this principle generally to the preceptive parts of scripture, all the mountains sink into a plain, and every thing is levelled down to the moral, or rather immoral capacity of the unregenerate.

Mr. Button enters into some curious distinctions relative to "natural and spiritual holiness," and "legal and evangelical spirituality," in order to evince the incapacity of our first parents for spiritual duties, and to invalidate the obligation of their sinful descendants to such sort of requirements. Other topics are also urged in the usual manner,—that the doctrine of particular redemption, of divine decrees, and man's dependence on divine influence for the performance of holy duties, are inconsistent with indefinite invitations, and the unqualified requirements of repentance and faith.

The amiable and lamented Mr. Button, though not possessed of much logical lore, conducted his part of the controversy with that Christian candour and good-will which pervaded all his conduct; and though not successful in the undertaking, he uniformly cherished a spirit of brotherly affection towards his opponent, and was a man of truly catholic principles, in spite of the theoretical circumscription of his creed.

Before any reply was made to Mr. Button's "Remarks," another opponent presented himself from a very different quarter, under the title of Philanthropos, who published his "Observations" on Mr. Fuller's treatise, in the hope of bringing him over to the Arminian system. This respectable individual, who was long a distinguished character among the General Baptists, was

THE REV. DAN TAYLOR.

Those who had watched the progress of controversy, must have observed the coincidence which is often found

betwixt systems that appear at first view at the utmost variance with each other. Some modern Arminians, who deny the doctrine of total depravity, maintain that it is the duty of all men to repent and believe the gospel, because all possess an inherent power of so doing, without any special divine assistance; while others who believe *that* assistance to be offered or put within the reach of every man, ground the obligation to faith and repentance on this superinduced ability. The high Calvinists, on the contrary, deny that any man in a state of unregeneracy is under an obligation to perform those duties, because they are not possessed of the requisite ability. Thus both concur in making moral ability the measure and the ground of obligation; a position which, when the terms are accurately defined and cleared of their ambiguity, conduct us to this very extraordinary conclusion,—that men are obliged to just as much of duty as they are inclined to.*

This singular sort of coincidence is to be met with in several parts of the present controversy. Mr. Taylor, as well as Mr. Button, insists that saving faith is something more than believing the divine testimony, and that it includes the actual coming to Christ for life; but Mr. T. of course contends, that the obligation to believe is co-extensive with the publication of the gospel. They are also agreed on another point; and that is, if regeneration precedes believing in Christ, as Mr. Fuller and Mr. Button both admit, then sinners are excusable in not believing, and that it is absurd to exhort them to believe, while in a state of unregeneracy. Mr. Taylor allows that men are born in sin, and that their inability to do things spiritually good is real and total; yet he contends that they ought not to be punished for it, or for any of its necessary effects, if the former were unavoidable, and the latter without remedy. Natural power he does not consider to be power, so long as there is a total want of moral capacity for using it, or for doing what is good; so that in his opinion it comes all to one, that "what we cannot do, we cannot do," whatever be the cause.

Mr. Fuller had admitted the infinite sufficiency of the death of Christ, while he pleaded for a limited design, and rested on the former the consistency of general calls and invitations. Mr. Taylor urges some strong objections to

* Hall's Help to Zion's Travellers; ed. 1815, p. xxv. Preface.

this, and hopes to convince his opponent that universal invitations necessarily imply universal provision. At the same time, by including the forgiveness of sins in the doctrine of redemption, Mr. T. uses the term in the same restricted sense as that of salvation; and consequently, whatever his ideas might be on the extent of the death of Christ, he could not properly be considered as the advocate of universal redemption.

Mr. Fuller replied to Mr. Button's "Remarks," and to Mr. Taylor's "Observations," at the same time in his

Defence of a Treatise, entitled, The Gospel of Christ worthy of all Acceptation. 1787.

Granting to Mr. Button various principles, common to them both as Calvinists, Mr. Fuller explains himself on the nature of true believing, and says it never was his design to exclude from it the idea of trust or confidence in Christ. Whether that be of the essence of faith itself, or an effect which immediately follows, he always considered them as inseparable.

"Faith, in its most general sense, he says, signifies the credit of some testimony, whether that testimony be true or false. When we speak of the faith of the gospel, as 'a belief of the truth,' it is not to be understood of all kinds of truth, nor even of all kinds of scripture truth. A true believer, so far as he understands it, believes all scripture truth; and to discredit any one truth in the Bible, knowing it to be such, is a damning sin: yet it is not the credit given to a chronological or historical fact, for instance, that denominates any one a true believer. The peculiar truth, by embracing of which we become believers in Christ, is *the gospel*, or the good news of salvation through his name. The belief of this *implies* the belief of other truths; such as the goodness of the divine government, the evil of sin, our lost and ruined condition by it, and our utter insufficiency to help ourselves; but it is the soul's embracing, or falling in with the way of salvation by Christ, that peculiarly denominates us true believers."

On the obligations of men to believe in Christ, Mr. Fuller refers to the body of evidence produced in the second part of his former Treatise, which had remained unanswered. He then passes on to various other topics which had been noticed in the course of the debate; such as—the causes to which the want of faith is ascribed—the punishments threatened and inflicted for not believing—the state of man in innocence—divine decrees—particular redemption—and the nature of spiritual dispositions; obviating the objections arising from some of these particu-

lars, and placing others in a strong position of defence He at the same time evinces the tendency of his own principles to establish the doctrines of human depravity, divine grace, and the work of the Holy Spirit; closing this part of the discussion with a few admonitory hints to his friendly opponent, on the fatal consequences of a ministry which declines all direct addresses to the unconverted, to repent and believe the gospel, and on the tendency of a principle which required such an exposition of the scriptures as had been exhibited in his performance. Fully persuaded however of the purity of Mr. Button's design, whatever might be his opinion of the part he had taken in the present controversy, he participated in the high esteem so generally entertained for his character.

Mr. Fuller entered on the defence of his Treatise on Faith, in reply to the objections of the *Rev. Dan Taylor*, with considerable satisfaction; feeling, as he said, that he had in his hand a two-edged sword, with which he could do some execution on the opposite systems of his adversaries. It is evident that his sentiments are hostile to both; and they provoked an equal degree of opposition in return. He was now placed, however, between two fires; the Hyper-Calvinists on the hills, and the Arminians in the vallies; and it was to be seen whether he could keep his ground between them.

Desirous of shortening the debate as much as possible, and of bringing the main question to a speedy issue, he selected only such topics as bore immediately upon it; but in the hands of Mr. Taylor, the controversy soon involved nearly all the points of difference in the adverse systems. The principal arguments, however, related to—the precedence of regeneration to faith—the inability of fallen man —and the extent of the death of Christ.

On the first of these, Mr. Fuller observes that,

"Not only scripture, but common observation, might teach us the need of a bias of mind, different from that which prevails over men in general, in order to our coming to Christ. Whoever be the cause of such a bias, let that at present be out of the question; suppose it is man himself, still a turn of some sort there must be; for it will hardly be said, that the same thoughts and temper of mind which lead a man to despise and reject the Saviour, will lead him also to esteem and embrace him! That a turn of mind is necessary to our coming to Christ, is evident from the nature of things; and if so, our mistake must lie, if any where, in ascribing it to the Spirit of God."

As Mr. Taylor was very tenacious for the priority of faith, and for considering regeneration as including the *whole* of that change which is necessary in order to denominate any one a Christian, and not merely its first commencement, Mr. Fuller was willing to allow that the term may be thus comprehensively understood in some parts of the New Testament; and that in this enlarged sense, regeneration is *by* the word. Still the great question is,

"Whether the Holy Spirit of God is the proper and efficient cause of a sinner's believing in Christ; or whether it be owing to his holy influence, and that alone, that one sinner believes in Christ rather than another. If this were but allowed, we should be content. If the first beginning of God's work upon the mind is *by* the word, let it but be granted that it is by the *agency* of the Holy Spirit, causing that word to be embraced by one person so as it is not by another, and so to become effectual, and we are satisfied. If this be but granted, it will amount to the same thing as that which we mean by regeneration preceding our coming to Christ, since the cause always precedes the effect."

The substance of what Mr. Taylor advanced on the subject of human inability, is as follows—That man was so reduced by the fall, as to be "really and totally unable to do good"—that if he had been left in this condition, he would not have been to blame for not doing it, but that his inability would have been his excuse, "let his practices have been as vile as they might"—but that God has not left him in this condition. He has sent his Son to die for all men universally; and by giving, or at least offering grace to all men, he removes the inability which they derived from the fall; and from hence they become accountable beings, and are inexcusable if they do not comply with spiritual requirements.

"If these things be true, it must follow," says Mr. Fuller, "that Christ did not die for the *sins* of any man, except it were Adam, since none of the fallen race could have *sinned* if he had never died. The reasonings of Mr. Taylor suppose that men are not chargeable with sin, or blameworthiness, independently of the death of Christ, and the grace of the gospel; and if so, it could not be to atone for *sin* that he laid down his life: for prior to the consideration of this, there was no sin for which he could have to atone.

"It seems if men had but *power* to comply, every idea of injustice would subside. Well, we affirm they *have power*. They have the same natural ability to embrace Christ as to reject him. They *could* comply with the gospel *if they would*. Is any thing more necessary to denominate them accountable beings? We believe not; and perhaps in fact, Mr. Taylor believes the same. In some places however he appears to think there is. Well, what is it? If any thing, it must be an *inclination*, as well as an ability. But would he be willing to

have his objection so stated, that it is hard that new obligations should be laid upon persons who have no *inclination* to what they already lie under? If so, it will afford a powerful plea to final unbelievers at the last day. No, it will be said, *they might have had an inclination if they would.* But let it be considered, whether any thing like this is revealed in scripture, and whether it be not repugnant even to common sense. *If they had been willing, they might, or would have been willing!*

"The whole force of Mr. Taylor's arguments, rests upon the supposition of that being true which is a matter of dispute; namely, that natural power is not power, and is not sufficient to denominate men accountable beings. His statement of the above objection takes this for granted; whereas this is what we positively deny, maintaining that natural power *is* power, properly so called, and *is* to all intents and purposes sufficient to render men accountable beings; that the want of inclination in a sinner is of no account with the Governor of the world; that he proceeds in his requirements, and that it is right he should proceed, in the same way as if no such disinclination existed.

"After all, it is doubtful whether Mr. Taylor means any thing more by his notions of grace than we do by natural ability. We allow that men can come to Christ, and do things spiritually good, *if they will.* He is not satisfied, it seems, with this; they must have something of *grace* given or offered; otherwise they cannot be accountable beings. Well, what does it amount to? Does he mean that they must have something of real good, or a holy inclination in them? I question whether he will affirm this. Does he mean that this supposed grace does any thing *effectual* towards making them willing? No such thing. What then does he mean? Nothing that I can comprehend more than this; that men may come to Christ *if they will.* His whole scheme of grace, therefore, amounts to no more than our natural ability. We admit that men in general are possessed of this ability; but then we have no notion of calling it *grace.* If we must be accountable beings, we apprehend this to be no more than an exercise of *justice.* What end they can have in calling this power by the name of grace, it is difficult to say, unless it be to avoid the odium of seeming to ascribe to divine grace nothing at all."

In proof of a limitation of design in the death of Christ, Mr. Fuller adverts to the promises made to Christ, of the certain efficacy of his death—the characters under which he died—the effects ascribed to his death, being such as do not terminate on all mankind—the intercession of Christ, founded on his death, not extending to all—the doctrine of personal and unconditional election as necessarily connected with a special design in his death—and the character of the redeemed in the world above.

The consistency of particular redemption, or of a limited design in the death of Christ, with the general calls and invitations of the gospel, and the comparative advantages of the opposite systems, are stated in the following manner:

"The provision made by the death of Christ is of two kinds,—a provision of pardon and acceptance for all believers—and a provision of grace to enable a sinner to believe. The first affords a *motive* for returning to God in Christ's name; the last excites to a *compliance* with that motive. Now in which of these has the scheme of Mr. T. any advantage of that which he opposes? Not in the first: we suppose the provisions of Christ's death altogether sufficient for the fulfilment of his promises, be they as extensive as they may—that full and free pardon is provided for all that believe in him—and that if all the inhabitants of the globe could be persuaded to return to God in Christ's name, they would undoubtedly be accepted of him. Does the opposite scheme propose any thing more? No; it pretends to no such thing as a provision for *unbelievers* being forgiven and accepted. Thus far at least, therefore, we stand upon equal ground.

"But has the scheme of our opponent the advantage in the *last* particular? Does it not boast of a universal provision of *grace*, sufficient to enable every man to comply with the gospel? It does; but what it amounts to, is difficult to say. Does it effectually produce in mankind in general any thing of a right spirit, any thing of a true desire to come to Christ for the salvation of their souls? No such thing is pretended. At most it only amounts to this, that God is ready to help them out of their condition, *if they will but ask him*; and to give them every *assistance* in the good work, if they will but be in earnest and set about it. Well, if this is the whole of which our opponent can boast, I see nothing superior in this neither, to the sentiment which he opposes. We consider the least degree of a right spirit as plentifully encouraged in the word of God. If a person do but truly *desire* to come to Christ, or *desire* the influence of the Holy Spirit to that end, we doubt not but grace is provided for his assistance. God will surely 'give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him.' Where then is the superiority of Mr. Taylor's system? It makes no effectual provision for begetting a right disposition in those who are so utterly destitute of it that they will not seek after it. It only encourages the well disposed; and as to these, if their well-disposedness is real, there is no want of encouragement for them in the system he opposes.

"According to Mr. Taylor's scheme, the redemption and salvation of the whole human race is left to uncertainty; to such uncertainty as to depend upon the fickle, capricious, and perverse will of man. It supposes no effectual provision made for Christ to 'see of the travail of his soul,' in the salvation of sinners. Mr. T. has a very great objection to a sinner's coming to Christ with a *peradventure;* but it seems he has no objection to his Lord and Saviour coming into the world, and laying down his life with no better security. Notwithstanding any provision made by his scheme, the Head of the church might have been without a single member, the King of Zion without a subject, and the Shepherd of Israel without any to constitute a flock. Satan might have triumphed for ever, and the many mansions in glory have remained eternally unoccupied by the children of men.

"Though Mr. Taylor's scheme professedly maintains that Christ died to atone for the sins of all mankind; yet in reality it amounts to no such thing. The sin of mankind may be distinguished into two kinds; that which is committed simply against God as a Lawgiver, antecedently to all considerations of the gift of Christ, and the grace of the gospel; and that which is committed more immediately against the gospel, despising the riches of God's goodness, and rejecting his way of salvation. Does Mr. Taylor maintain that Christ made atonement

for both these? On the contrary, his scheme supposes that he atoned for neither. Not for the *first;* for he abundantly insists that there could be nothing of the nature of *blameworthiness* in this, and consequently nothing to require an atonement. Not for the *last;* for if so, atonement must be made for *impenitency* and *unbelief;* and in that case surely, these evils would not prove the ruin of the subject."

Mr. Taylor, however, was not to be silenced by this Reply; he therefore continued his "Observations," in Thirteen additional Letters, repeating the same objections to Mr. Fuller's hypothesis, but without casting any additional light upon the subject. He entirely overlooks Mr. Fuller's explanation and concession on the subject of regeneration; that if understood in a sense which includes not only the passive reception but the actual effects of Christian principle, there could be no objection to its being produced "by the word of truth;" nor would it be objected that the former should be ascribed to the same means, if the agency of the Holy Spirit were but admitted. Instead of meeting this statement, or complying with the requisite admission, Mr. Taylor contents himself with denying that the change of heart implied in the reception of truth is called regeneration, and insists that his opponent's candid explanation has altered the state of the question. He believes in the universality of divine influence, but in none that is effectual; and therefore does not teach us to what cause the previous disposition is to be ascribed, or how it comes to pass that any one is inclined rather than another to receive the truth. It would save much trouble in this controversy, and relieve the subject of many unnecessary distinctions, if the advocates of Mr. Taylor's scheme would at once inform us how it is, that while God bestows grace alike on all men, it is he that makes them to differ.

It is not a little extraordinary, that in the early part of the debate, Mr. Taylor highly approved of the perspicuous manner in which Mr. Fuller had stated the difference between natural and moral inability in fallen man: and was fully persuaded, "that a good understanding of this distinction would contribute to the establishment of the doctrine he had undertaken to maintain;" yet when the effects of this distinction began to operate powerfully on his own system, he changed his mind, and imposed another meaning on the terms. There appears, however, to be no other way of accounting for the inconsistencies and contradictions to be met with in his various remarks on this subject

He writes like one who saw and was afraid to meet this flaming sword; and lest his own troops should be put to flight, he would not acknowledge that the Hyper-Calvinists had been defeated.

"Natural ability" is now the power of performing natural actions, and "moral ability" the power of performing those which are spiritual! This is an attempt to distinguish the use of these terms by the objects to which they are applied, as if the same faculties were not competent to both good and evil, and could not perform natural and spiritual actions, according as the will may be inclined. Mr. Taylor therefore concludes, that if God require any thing of a moral or spiritual nature of any man, it is but right that he should furnish him with moral power for its performance. Thus he represents moral ability as if it were a distinct faculty, formed by the Creator for the performance of moral actions, while natural power is given for the performance of natural actions; and the reader is led to imagine that God is as much required to provide the one as the other, in order to render sinful men accountable for their conduct. But as moral ability is nothing more than the power of the will, improperly so called, or a disposition to employ our natural faculties in a right manner, it cannot be necessary that a person should be actually disposed to what is right, in order to render him accountable, but merely that he should be capable of performing right actions, if he be so inclined.

Mr. Fuller admitted the universality of the atonement, both in his first and second treatise; or that the death of Christ had opened a way, whereby God could, consistently with his justice, forgive any sinner whatever who returns to him by Jesus Christ; and that in this sense he died for the sins of all mankind, and therefore all are invited to come unto God by him, assured that whosoever cometh he will in no wise cast out. But while a way is thus prepared for the salvation of sinners without distinction, Mr. Fuller at the same time maintains that an effectual provision is made for all who are finally saved, and that their salvation is the consequence of a special design.

This hypothesis, as has been observed, appears to possess every advantage of which the opposite one can boast; and notwithstanding all that Mr. Taylor has written about universal provision, he has at length but little to object. "It is so plain, (he says,) that Christ might absolutely design the salvation of some, and yet lay down his life for

all, that I think the consistency of these two positions was hardly ever denied by any man of consideration, whatever were his sentiments respecting either of them."* After this there is no need for quotation, nor for any farther dispute on this head.

Mr. Fuller felt extremely unwilling to continue the controversy with such an invincible opponent, who would demand more of his time than could conveniently be spared from more important engagements; he, therefore, chose to print his next tract in the name of a third person, and for many years it was supposed to be the production of Dr. Ryland. This piece was entitled,

The Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace, with the certain Success of Christ's Sufferings in behalf of all who are finally saved: containing Remarks upon the Observations of the Rev. Dan Taylor on Mr. Fuller's Reply to Philanthropos. By AGNOSTOS.

This performance, which displays as much acumen as either of the former, and evidently bespeaks the same hand to have been employed, takes a review of the principal topics in debate, and ably refutes the various objections advanced by Mr. Fuller's opponent. Driven from every other refuge, Mr. Taylor fixes on the following apparently strong position as his dernier resort, in defence of the supposed innocence of moral impotence; namely, "If men could never avoid it, cannot deliver themselves from it, and the blessed God will not deliver them, surely they ought not to be punished for it, or for any of its necessary effects." On this and on every other occasion, Mr. Talyor found it convenient to represent *moral* inability, not only in terms inapplicable to the subject, and which imply misfortune rather than blame, but so as to confound it with every just idea of *natural* and involuntary weakness. In this way his positions have the appearance of plausibility, and the incautious reader is stunned by his objections. "Agnostos" unravels the sophism at considerable length, and affords a satisfactory solution of the difficulties it had occasioned. His pamphlet indeed is chiefly occupied in detecting the inconclusive reasonings and tergiversations of Mr. T.'s productions, and in exhibiting the real points of difference between the two antagonists.

* Thirteen Letters, pp. 91, 92.

Mr. Taylor at length terminated this tedious controversy, by publishing his "Friendly Conclusion," in reply to the Letters of Agnostos; in which he in effect congratulates himself in having brought Mr. Fuller so nearly to his own views of the evangelical system! This unseasonable and unfounded triumph was so completely disgusting, that it was some time before Mr. Fuller could be induced to read this last act of the drama, and longer still before he could forget what appeared to him at the time, an instance of disingenuousness, but which was clearly capable of being attributed to a more honourable motive. It was not very grateful indeed to his feelings, that at the time he was encountering the system of corrupted Calvinism, a stranger passing by should seem to intermeddle with strife that did not belong to him; and though this stranger set out very pleasantly, appearing rather as a coadjutor, and entertaining considerable expectations, he evidently lost much of his candour and good temper in the progress of the debate, and got deeply embroiled in the contest which his thankless services were intended to adjust. Independently of the disadvantages of the system which he had undertaken to defend, it may be doubted whether he well understood the true grounds of the controversy; at any rate, he was but ill prepared to meet the close metaphysical reasoning of Mr. Fuller, or to defend himself against the pugilistic efforts of such a gigantic adversary.

The discussion, however, with all its imperfections, was productive of important advantages. It had its effect on some of Mr. Taylor's connections, in giving a more evangelical tone to their preaching; and on Mr. Fuller's, in rendering the doctrine of the Cross more generally interesting. The universality of the atonement was more fully acknowledged, as the ground of general invitations; addresses to the unregenerate were applied with less reserve, and with greater pungency and force. Mr. Taylor had ventured to suggest, that Mr. Fuller could not, on his own principles, fasten a conviction of blame on the conscience of any sinner, for not turning to God, and believing in Jesus Christ. A similar hint was afterwards given by another of his opponents; and it was partly with a view of refuting these insinuations, and of exhibiting the practical efficacy of his own system, that he wrote his admirable tract, entitled, "The Great Question answered;" in which the principles maintained in the present controversy, di-

vested of all their polemical attire, and barbed by the hand of a master, are directed with inconceivable force to the consciences of the unconverted.

It must also be acknowledged, that contrary to the spirit of most controversialists, who seek to widen the breach rather than to heal it, there was a disposition on both sides to approximate, and to sink the minor differences between them. Mr. Taylor had no wish to controvert the doctrine of election, of divine decrees, or of final perseverance, nor even to deny the speciality of design in the death of Christ, with respect to those who are finally saved; provided his opponent would admit that provision was made for all, and that no insuperable impediment arising from moral impotence should be placed in the way of any man's salvation. Mr. Fuller on his part also was willing to concede the universality of the death of Christ, the general indirect influences of the Holy Spirit, and regeneration by the word; provided his opponent would admit of divine agency, and that the difference made in the conversion of a sinner is to be ascribed to free and effectual grace.

This reciprocal disposition is highly amiable; and discovers, not an undervaluation, but a just discrimination of the comparative importance of christian principles. Amongst the temperate and well informed, who are fully aware of the difficulties attending each hypothesis, there can scarcely be a moment's hesitation in admitting, that the points in which these two good men were agreed are of infinitely higher moment than those in which they differ, whatever be their supposed magnitude; and that upon either system the foundations of human hope remain unshaken. Nor is there any thing in the contrariety of views entertained on these subjects, which ought to obstruct the most cordial affection and harmony among real christians.

Mr. Fuller's doctrine however was destined to undergo another trial; and before he had retired from the scene of action,

THE REV. JOHN MARTIN

made his appearance, thundering across the ground with a ponderous load of polemics, and threatening to give his system to the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

Mr. Martin was formerly pastor of the Baptist church at Sheepshead in Leicestershire, where he lived on terms of intimacy with the venerable Mr. Hall of Arnsby. He afterwards removed to London, and became pastor of the Baptist church first in Grafton street, and more recently in Keppel street, Russel Square. In the earlier part of his ministry, Mr. Martin acquiesced in the sentiments adopted by Mr. Fuller, and stated them in some of his printed sermons; but having changed his mind upon the subject, without any direct avowal of the fact, he commenced hostilities with his former connections, who had not shown him that deference which his imaginary pre-eminence demanded.

Neither satisfied with the labours of Mr. Button, nor with those of Mr. Taylor, in this field of controversy, though differing but little in sentiment from the former, Mr. Martin comes forward with his "Thoughts on the Duty of Man, relative to Faith in Jesus Christ," and enters on the discussion with a great swell of language; giving gratuitous information of his own advantages, of his superior experience and attainments, of the reputation he anticipated from the contest, and of his opponent's inconsistency and incompetence, towards whom he performs a haughty condescension, in noticing the writings of such an obscure individual. This part of the present controversy, though amusing enough, is altogether the least satisfactory, since it abounded with personalities which it is painful to recollect, and still more so to repeat. Mr. Fuller, we are informed, did not wish this piece to appear in any future edition of his works. Justice however to the interests of truth, and to the memory of so able an advocate, will not admit of its being wholly consigned to oblivion; the course of argument is too memorable to be forgotten.

Omitting what is extraneous in Mr. Martin's publication, there are only three points which come under any thing like a regular discussion; these are —love to God—divine efficiency— and human endeavour.

Understanding by the term, 'disinterested love,' an exclusive affection for those properties of the divine nature which bear no relation to creatures, or in which they have no immediate interest, if such there be, Mr. Martin easily and pompously announces it a mere nonentity; and as the love of an amiable object cannot be separated from the pleasure which such an affection must necessarily produce,

he is equally confident that disinterested love can have no place among creatures; and even reproaches Mr. Fuller with having imported this contraband article, not from the island of Utopia, but from a certain market in America. He also represents Armenians, Mystics, and Deists, as its chief detailers and defenders.

The question arising from Mr. Fuller's statement was simply this: 'Is it possible for us to take pleasure in an object for its own sake?' Mr. Martin answers, No.—Wherefore? Because, says he, that object affords us pleasure; that is, we cannot take pleasure in an object, because we can and do find pleasure in it!

"When I speak of loving God for himself," says Mr. Fuller, "I neither suppose it is on account of some excellencies in his nature, which have no relation to our welfare; nor that we feel, or ought to feel, regardless of our best interests, honour or happiness. Each of these may, and ought no doubt, to be pursued in subordination to the divine glory; and a proper pursuit of them, instead of setting aside the idea of love to God for his own excellency, necessarily implies it. Am I, for instance, in search for true honour? If I am, it is of that honour which arises from being approved of God. But in order to his approbation being the summit of my ambition, I must necessarily love him for what he is in himself. What gratification could the applause of a person afford me, of whom I had but a mean opinion, and towards whom I had no previous regard?—Am I in pursuit of substantial happiness? If so, I am seeking the enjoyment of God, as my everlasting portion. But how could I conceive of God as a portion worthy to be sought, or at all adapted to make me happy, unless I loved him for what he is in himself, antecedently to my enjoyment of him? Do men ever seek a portion in earthly things, without viewing that portion as good and desirable in itself, whether they have it or not?"

On the subject of 'divine efficiency,' Mr. Martin allows that we need the Spirit of God to enable us to do our duty, but is unwilling to admit that faith comes under that description. He wishes to consider it as a gift, rather than a duty; or not a duty, because it is a gift; and censures Mr. F. for confounding blessings with requirements, and dispositions with acts of obedience. To heighten this absurdity and confusion, he labours to represent it as an assumption of divine efficiency: requiring men to be what God alone can make them, as if it was their duty, rather than his prerogative, to produce spiritual principles. By a similar perversion of the intellect, he considers men as voluntarily active in cases where their passiveness is necessarily implied; and then represents Mr. Fuller's system as requiring the unregenerate to quicken themselves, to make

the word effectual to salvation, to convince themselves of sin, to be born again, and to be the sons of God!

It is not easy to witness the tenor of Mr. Martin's reasoning on this point, and at the same time preserve that gravity of countenance which his friends might imagine to be due to the station he held in society. From the period when he first entered on the present controversy, even to hoary years, he had one short argument against its being the duty of men to believe the gospel, which he brought forward a thousand times, both from the pulpit and the press, with little variation; and it was generally couched in the following short and elegant sentence, accompanied with an extraordinary swell of utterance: *Will any man tell me, that it is my duty to do that* WITHOUT *divine assistance, which I can only do* WITH!—This question ever appeared to him to possess all the properties of an axiom, or self-evident demonstration; and beyond it, the good man was never able to advance a single step; but when he lifted up his feet, as Fuller said, he was always careful to put them down again in the same place. No reasoning, however cogent, could lead him to understand, that though faith is the gift of God, it is not less the duty of men on that account, since the same things under different views are both God's gift and men's duty. It is God's work to *bestow* faith and repentance; but it is man's duty, in obedience to his will, to repent and believe the gospel. God in bestowing these, makes men only to see things as they *ought*, and to be affected and disposed towards them as they *ought*. He may do this or not, according to his sovereign good pleasure; but men's obligations remain still the same, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear; and the gospel revelation leaves them without excuse. John xv. 22—24.

Though Mr. Martin did not directly deny faith to be the duty of the unregenerate, nor attempt to invalidate the evidence by which that position is supported, yet he was for bringing the matter a little more within the compass of human ability, and for including the sum total of obligation under the whimsical notion of 'endeavour;' so that it is not man's duty to repent and believe the gospel, but to 'endeavour' to do so, and to use means for that purpose. Yet he did not pretend that these endeavours would be successful, or issue in the possession of the good desired; but after all his endeavours, the sinner may perish everlastingly.

The recital of such unmeaning distinctions and refinements can now answer no other purpose than that of affording additional evidence of what is every day but too apparent—the weakness of the human understanding, and the power of prejudice in resisting the clearest dictates of reason and revelation. A short quotation, in answer to this sort of logic, is quite sufficient.

"The grounds on which Mr. Martin supports his denial of its being the duty of a bad man to *be* a good man are such, that if they prove any thing, they will prove that it is not the duty of a villain to *be* an honest man; but barely to make certain 'endeavours' towards it, which may or may not be effectual, as God shall please to bless them. But if such a character were a *debtor* to Mr. Martin, and were to urge that though he had 'endeavoured' to his utmost to become of an honest mind, yet it had not pleased God at present to crown his 'endeavours' with success, it is well if he did not treat him a little uncivilly!"

Mr. Fuller's Reply is entitled, *Remarks on Mr. Martin's Publication, in Five Letters to a Friend.* 1789. And though the reader would think that this performance contains a sufficient quantity of nitre, yet Mr. Hall of Arnsby, to whom these Letters were addressed, and who was well acquainted with Mr. Martin, afterwards told the Author that he had been too sparing of his adversary, whose supercilious airs had merited the severest chastisement.

Still writhing under the lashes of his antagonist, Mr. Martin continued his lucubrations for two years longer, in a Second and a Third Part, successively written on the same subject; but the contempt which Mr. Fuller felt and frequently expressed, for such a writer, prevented his making any farther reply; and Mr. Martin afterwards construed this silence into a presumption, that he had "said much that could not be refuted!"

The tottering cause of Hyper-calvinism now called forth a tribe of advocates of various descriptions. Some of them had learned to write, and others could read English; but they all helped to sound the alarm, and to preserve the stump of dagon. The productions of these men are too contemptible for criticism, and would not have been noticed in this place, but for the sake of marking the progress of the present controversy, and of exhibiting more of its effects.

Another of these Norfolk Baptists, Mr. Hupton of Claxton, took up his pen, and aimed what he called "A Blow at the Root of Fullerism, in a Letter to a Friend." And though this "blow" was struck, as another person

observed, "with a wooden hatchet," and was perfectly harmless, we shall let the reader see Mr. Fuller putting his fingers to the edge, and examining the obtuseness of this wooden instrument. "To call the principles opposed in this piece *Fullerism*, (says he,) shows but little acquaintance with things. If the doctrine which Mr. Fuller has defended contained any thing new, or different from what has been taught by all our divines, except a few in the last century, there might have been some colour for giving it a new name. But it does not: and therefore it might as well be called Calvinism, Owenism or Bunyanism, as Fullerism."*

We are happy to find, however, that Mr. Hupton has learned some things, which many of his brethren have not learned; namely, that it is no just objection to this view of things, that the unconverted *cannot* of themselves believe, or that faith, wherever it exists, is the gift and operation of God. We wish him to go on in this track of just thinking, and he will, ere he is aware, agree with the author whom he opposes. It is true, he several times recals these concessions, or what amounts to it, and reasons on the contrary principles: but we can make allowances for this. It is no easy matter, when a man is once bewildered in a false scheme, to find the way out of it. In consideration of the concessions he has made, and of a hope that it may not be lost upon him, we are willing to give what he advances a more particular examination, than it might otherwise require.

What he alleges, of natural men being under a covenant of works, is obviated in the treatise entitled, "The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation," second edition, pp. 112—114.

Mr. Hupton allows that faith is required by the moral law, but not that which stands connected with eternal life. We would recommend him seriously to inquire, whether a real compliance with *any* duty required by God's word, be not connected with salvation. We do not mean to say that every, or indeed any other duty, has the same kind of connection with salvation as faith has; but connected it certainly is. Whosoever obeyeth any one of God's commands, 'doeth righteousness; and he that doeth righteousness is righteous,' and that in an evangelical sense, though not on account of so doing. 1 John iii. 7.

* Theol. and Biblical Mag. 1804, p. 112.

Mr. H. should have known, that Mr. F. does not pretend that faith is a requirement of the law, *as a covenant of works;* but merely that the love of God, which the law, as the eternal standard of right and wrong, is allowed to require, would lead any fallen creature, who lives under the light of revelation, to embrace the gospel.* He should not therefore have attempted to reason from such passages in which faith and the law are opposed, as a medium of obtaining eternal life. To insist, as Mr. H. seems to do, that the moral law is the rule of duty to unbelievers, and the gospel to believers, is Neonomianism with a witness! He should have considered, that when the gospel is called a law, it is in a figurative or improper sense, as taking place of the Mosaic dispensation, perhaps in some such manner as christianity, if God should continue to bless it in Hindostan, may be termed a new *caste.*

It does not follow from faith being required by the law as a rule of dut y, and bestowed by grace according to the divine purpose, that the covenant of works and the covenant of grace are the same. Mr. H. should have recollected here, what he conceded in his preface, that "it is the duty of every man to love God with all his heart, though he cannot do this of himself. Therefore if any of the apostate children of Adam love God at all, he must work in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. But then it does not follow, that because he must circumcise their hearts to love him, or else they will hate him, that it is not their duty to love him." This reasoning is just, and amounts to the same thing as saying, That which *was* required by the covenant of works, and is still required by the law as an eternal rule of right and wrong, is produced only by the Holy Spirit, as given in the covenant of grace.

We shall not join the outcry of which Mr. H. complains, "Away with your niceties and particularities!" We only wish him to distinguish *justly*, and not to attempt to build again the things which he destroyed, lest he make himself a transgressor.

It does not follow, because the law revealed no Saviour, that therefore it makes no requirements on his behalf, when revealed by the gospel. If it did, it must also follow, that there can be no transgressions committed *against him* by unbelievers: for sin is a transgression of the law.

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* See Gospel worthy of all Acceptation, pp. 49—53.

Mr. H. thinks that the doctrine he opposes may be overturned, from the *immutability* of the law; by which he seems to mean, that what it required of man in innocence, it must still require of fallen man, neither more nor less. But if so, we are not obliged to obey any other parent than our Creator, nor to provide for our children; for man in innocence was not obliged to either of these duties. Nor is any sinner bound to be sorry for what he has done amiss, or to give any kind of credence to the gospel, or even so much as to attend upon the preaching of it; for none of these things were binding upon man in innocence. But "if the law required faith in Christ, it must have revealed the object." If it had *formally* required it, it certainly would have required that the object should be revealed: but its *virtually* requiring it, which is all that is pleaded for, renders the revelation of the object no more necessary, than its virtually requiring obedience to parents rendered it necessary for a parent to exist at the time.

Mr. H. talks of our "justifying infidels:" but if he do not relinquish this reasoning, he will not be able to condemn them. Are they not required to believe things, which were not revealed to man in innocence? He acknowledges, however, before he has done, that "every particular required by the law was not clearly and fully expressed by Moses, in the first accounts he has given of it." But then, why does he reason as if it were otherwise? He contends that since that time, "all the fulness of duty required by it has been revealed in the scriptures." Very good: and if these sacred oracles do not enforce faith in Christ on unbelievers, even that faith which, where it exists, has the promise of eternal life, let the idea of its being a duty be rejected.

Mr. Hupton calls upon his correspondent to show where the law (he must mean, as it is expounded by the whole tenor of the scriptures) "teaches and commands us to believe in Jesus Christ and his salvation, and to trust in him for life eternal." For answer, he might be referred to the whole of the second part of "The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation," which he does not appear to have read.

Upon the whole, though we have pointed out the above instances of what we count false reasoning, yet we are glad to find so much of truth in the performance as we do; and would seriously recommend the author to pursue his own concessions, with a desire to know the truth, and pray to God to guide him into it, without being affrighted at the

nickname which he has given to the doctrine he opposes, wherewith he might affright others."*

The last, but not the least considerable of Mr. Fuller's opponents, on the subject of Faith, was

THE REV. ARCHIBALD MACLEAN,

one of the Pastors of the Baptist church, then meeting in Niddry-street, Edinburgh.

In Mr. Fuller's first treatise, and during the preceding part of the controversy, he defined faith to be a belief of the truth, or a cordial reception of the gospel; maintaining at the same time that it is a holy exercise, arising from a renewal of the heart. But as this did not directly include a reliance on Christ for salvation, though that was stated to be a necessary consequence of true believing, the definition was objected to by his former opponents, as not coming fully up to the idea of saving faith.

Mr. Maclean, on the contrary, considered the latter part of the definition as including too much; and especially that the doctrine of a previous disposition in order to believing was wholly inadmissible. He therefore added to a second edition to his treatise on "The Commission of Christ," several pages of animadversion, charging these sentiments with a tendency to subvert the great doctrine of justification by grace alone, but without mentioning the name of the author. This charge fell, of course, on each of Mr. Fuller's former opponents, equally with himself, though he alone must bear the burden and heat of the day.

These consequences are examined by Mr. Fuller, in an *Appendix* to a new and improved edition of his Treatise on Faith, published in 1801, fourteen years after the first appearance of the work, and subsequently to his having been engaged in other arduous controversies.

In the course of a year, Mr. Maclean came forward with "A Reply to Mr. Fuller's *Appendix*; particularly to his doctrine of antecedent holiness, and the nature and object of justifying faith." In this Reply the author very modestly intimates, that Mr. Fuller was "much his superior in polemical talents, and that it was with great reluctance he entered on the present controversy," which in fact originated in a previous conversation and epistolary correspon-

* Biblical Magazine. 1803. pp. 112—114.

dence between the parties, of which each complained that undue advantage had been taken. Mr. Fuller however had no cause to be ashamed of his antagonist; for he found him "an acute reasoner, and mighty in the scriptures."

But in the progress of their theological warfare, this sort of complaisance was easily declined; for, as a shrewd writer observed, when expressing his dislike of controversy, it generally begins with 'Dear Sir,' and ends with 'Sir!' These formidable antagonists nevertheless enjoyed some friendly interviews with each other, which afforded opportunity for mutual explanations and expressions of esteem. In the autumn of 1796, Mr. Maclean visited Kettering, and preached for Mr. Fuller; when a conversation ensued, which prepared the way for future discussion. On the arrival of the stranger, Mr. Fuller pleasantly intimated, that though it was not the custom of the English churches 'to wash the saints' feet,' yet if he would allow him, he would very cheerfully clean his boots, and bring him a dry pair of slippers. On other occasions Mr. Fuller called on his friend at Edinburgh, who offered an apology for some expression in his last performance; and though Mr. Fuller professed to the very last that he was "unconscious of any unbrotherly feeling" towards Mr. Maclean, yet he neither admired the reflections contained in some part of his writings, nor those notions of uniformity which excluded him from the pulpit of his opponent, whenever he visited the northern metropolis. It is said that this unbrotherly exclusion was contrary to the mind of Mr. Maclean, and that it was imposed by his more rigid colleagues; yet it is very well known that the Scottish Baptists in general refuse communion to their English brethren.

Mr. Fuller took no notice of Mr. Maclean's "Reply" to his Appendix, for upwards of seven years; not only on account of his missionary avocations, and other superior engagements; but from feeling disgusted, as he said, with the illiberality of his opponent, in repeatedly arraigning his motives, accusing him of intentional misrepresentation, and insinuating that he could "take either side of a question, as he found occasion." This long continued silence inducing a suspicion on the other side, more than once or twice repeated, that Mr. Maclean's performance was found to be unanswerable, Mr. Fuller at length produced his admirable

Strictures on Sandemanianism, in Twelve Letters to a Friend. 1810.

In this work, which discovers an intensity of thought, and cost the Author more labour than any other of his compositions, he does not undertake a direct answer to Mr. Maclean; nor did he intend that its contents should be considered as generally applicable to him, though he takes frequent occasion to notice the principal arguments. Mr. Fuller acknowledges, indeed, what his eager partizans seem not to observe, "that in the *Appendix* to the last edition of his Treatise on Faith, he was guilty of an oversight, in attributing to Mr. Maclean many sentiments which did not belong to him. This mis-statement," says Mr. Fuller, "was owing to my having at the time entirely forgotten his piece on *The Calls of the Gospel*, and my considering an anonymous performance as his which was written by a Mr. Barnard. It is true I had the means of knowing better, and should have been more attentive to them: in this, however, lay the whole of my fault. It never was my design for a moment to misrepresent Mr. Maclean, or any other man; nor did I ever feel the least reluctance to make the most explicit acknowledgment.

"I may add, though I am sorry that I mistook him, yet I am glad I was mistaken. The difference between us is so much the less, which to any one who wishes to unite with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, as far as possible, must afford a degree of satisfaction."*

In conformity with these benevolent sentiments, it will be our first pleasure to notice the points of coincidence between these two eminent men, especially as they are of higher importance than the things in which they differed. And it is not a little gratifying to find, that notwithstanding the warmth of the discussion, they were well *agreed* in the following particulars, relative to the present controversy—

1. That faith is the belief of whatever God hath revealed in his word, and that upon his authority alone; that the faith which has the promise of eternal life, is the belief of the gospel, or the good news of the fulfilment of the Old-testament prophecies, in the coming, life, death, resurrection, and exaltation of the Son of God, and of the

* *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, pp. 59, 60. Note.

salvation which he has thereby obtained for sinners of all nations.

2. That as true faith is always represented as affecting the heart, and influencing the life, it must, therefore, be a belief of the quality, as well as the reality of its object; that it includes a perception of the excellency and glory of the gospel, as exhibiting a scheme of salvation full of God, every way worthy of him, and declarative of his true character; and of the amiableness and suitableness of Christ as a Saviour, according as he is revealed in the gospel; and that without this, the *truth* is not believed.

3. That though trusting in Christ, or relying on him for salvation, is not properly included in the nature of faith, seeing it is the effect of believing the divine testimony concerning him; yet that it is inseparable from true believing, is often considered as equivalent, and that there is no saving faith without it.

4. They both contended that it is the indispensable duty of all who hear the gospel to believe it to the saving of the soul; that it is expressly commanded in the scriptures, and essential to true obedience.

5. That unbelief is a great and heinous sin against God; that it arises from an evil heart, from voluntary ignorance, love of the present world, and aversion from the things of God; that it makes him a liar, rejects his amazing love and grace, as revealed in the gospel, and is threatened with eternal damnation.

6. That men's inability to believe, where the light of the gospel is enjoyed, is not natural, but moral, and, therefore, culpable; that it arises not from the want of information, or natural capacity, but from wilful depravity, and enmity against the truth.

7. That in consequence of this depravity, and the blindness of the mind, a divine energy is necessary to make men know and believe the truth as it is in Jesus; and that saving faith is the gift of God, and an effect of the regenerating influence of his word and Holy Spirit.

8. They also both maintained, though sometimes slightly misunderstanding one another, that faith has revealed truth only for its object, or that which is true antecedently to its being believed, and whether it be believed or not; that the finished work of Christ, exclusive of every act, exercise, or thought of the human mind, is that for the sake of which a sinner is justified before God; that no qualifications of any kind are necessary to warrant our

believing in him; and that the first scriptural consolation received by the believer arises from the gospel, and not from reflecting on the feelings of his own mind towards it.

The points on which they *differ*, though of some consequence, are merely collateral to these subjects; and relate more to metaphysical distinctions, than to any leading article of the christian system.

1. Mr. Maclean, though he does not consider faith as a passive admission of the truth, but allows it to be an act or exercise of the mind; yet is for excluding the influence of the will and affections, and making it a mere believing exercise of the understanding.

It is admitted by Mr. Fuller, that faith has its seat in the understanding, yet that it may be influenced by the disposition. Unbelief is seated in the understanding, as much as belief; yet it is not denied that this is influenced by the disposition. Mr. Maclean himself admits that unbelief arises not merely from ignorance, but also from the aversion of the will, whereby the judgment is blinded, and most unreasonably prejudiced against the truth. Mr. F. of course concludes, that the opposite of this cannot be a mere exercise of the understanding.

2. Mr. Maclean pleads for such a belief of the gospel as has nothing in it of a holy nature, nothing of conformity to the moral law; and contends that it is holy only in reference to its objects and effects, and not in its own nature; though he admits that it is the root of all christian virtues, and that which gives glory to God, and without which it is impossible to please him. He also allows that faith is a duty of the highest obligation, and unbelief a great and heinous sin.

Mr. Fuller on the contrary contends that as faith is a duty, it must be a holy exercise, because God can require nothing but what is holy, and nothing but what comes under the influence of the will; that if faith be the root of all christian virtues, it must itself be virtuous, for that no holy effects can arise from a principle that is not holy; and that if there be no holiness in faith, there can be no sin in its opposite, which nevertheless is allowed to be exceedingly sinful. He also pleads that if faith be a duty, and yet includes in it "nothing of conformity to the moral law," it must then be a requirement of a new and remedial law; and if the love of God, which is required by the old law, would not lead any sinner to believe in Christ, as he is revealed in the gospel, he asks, Why is *unbelief* alleged

to the Jews as a proof that they had not the *love* of God in them. John v. 42—47.

3. Mr. Maclean's objection to the holy nature of faith is thus stated :

"When men include in the very nature of justifying faith such good dispositions, holy affections, and pious exercises of heart, as the moral law requires, and so make them necessary (no matter under what considerations) to acceptance with God, it perverts the apostles' doctrine upon this important subject, and makes justification to be *as it were* by the works of the law."*

To this Mr. Fuller replies.—

"I know not of any writer who has given such a definition of faith as this statement would represent. No more holy affection is pleaded for in faith, than unholy disaffection is allowed to be in unbelief. But the design is manifestly to exclude *all* holy affection from faith, as being favourable to self righteousness.

If therefore *repentance* be considered as necessary to forgiveness, seeing it must be allowed to include holy affection, it will be considered as favourable to self-righteousness. And as to distinguishing between what is necessary *in the established order of things*, and what is necessary as *a procuring cause*, this will not be admitted ; for it is 'no matter under what consideration.' If any thing required by the moral law be rendered necessary, it makes justification to be '*as it were* by the works of the law.'

As Mr. Maclean, however, in his piece on "The Calls and Invitations of the Gospel," has gone pretty far towards answering himself, I shall transcribe a passage from that performance. "It is an unscriptural refinement upon divine grace, (he there says) and contrary to the doctrine of the apostles, to class faith and repentance with the works of the law, and to state them as equally opposite to free justification. Indeed neither faith nor repentance are the meritorious or procuring cause of a sinner's justification, any more than the works of the law are; (and who that really believes and repents will imagine that they are?) But still the one is opposed to free justification, the other not. To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; and faith and repentance corresponding exactly with the manifestation of divine grace, as freely justifying the guilty through the atonement, are in their very nature opposite to all self-dependence, and lead men to glory only in the Lord." p. 26.

We see here, adds Mr. Fuller, that there is nothing in the nature of *repentance* that clashes with a free justification, which yet must be allowed to include a portion of holy affection. Why then object to the same thing in *faith?* Is it because holy affection is 'required by the moral law?' Be it so; it is the same in repentance as in faith ; and if the one may 'in its very nature' agree with a free justification, so may the other. The truth is, the moral law materially considered, is not opposed to free justification. The love of God and man is in its own nature as opposite to self-righteous pride, as faith and repentance are. It is not the 'law that is against the promises,' but *those works of the law done by a sinful creature with a view of obtaining life, or of pro-*

* *Commission*, second edition, Note.

curing acceptance with God as the reward of them. If holy affection were urged with such a view, then were it opposed to the free grace of the gospel; but while this is not the case, all such reasonings are 'unscriptural refinements.'

If men make a righteousness of their faith, it is not owing to these representations of it, but to their own corruptions; for let faith include what good disposition it may, it is no part of the meritorious cause of justification; and let it be simplified as it may, even till it shall contain no more of the holy nature of God than a glance of the eye, yet it is not on this account more friendly to the doctrine of grace, nor less liable to become the food of a self-righteous spirit. The way in which this spirit is cut up in the New Testament is, not by reducing faith to an unfeeling speculation, but by denouncing the curse against every one who comes short of perfect obedience. Gal. iii. 10."*

4. There is also some difference between these writers, on the subject of a previous principle in order to believing, but which appears to have been magnified beyond its real importance. Considering faith as a moral, rather than an intellectual exercise, Mr. Fuller maintained that it is the *effect* of the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit, or a persuasion of divine truth arising from the state of the heart; alleging that the same state of mind which disposes men to reject the gospel, could not incline them to embrace it; and that except a man be *born again*, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God. He, therefore, in the order of nature, placed regeneration before faith, though not in the order of time; and while he admitted the instrumentality of the word in effecting this change, he insisted that it could not be by the word *believed*, for then faith would be the effect of itself.

Mr. Maclean, considering faith rather as an intellectual than a moral exercise, reverses this order; making regeneration to be the effect of faith, and spiritual dispositions to follow upon right perception.

"What I maintain, says he, is briefly this: That in regeneration, the Holy Spirit, in the first instance, by his inexplicable energy, gives the mind a believing or realizing perception of the truth as revealed in the word, *and thereby operates on the will and affections*, not only in the beginning of the change, but in all the subsequent progress of sanctification; for men are not only born again of the incorruptible seed of the word, but are also sanctified through the truth, which is the word of God."†

Yet in another of his performances, he says:

"It is a doctrine clearly taught in the scriptures, that none have a true understanding of the gospel but such as are taught of God, by

* *Strictures*, pp. 37—39. † *Reply*, p. 35.

the special illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit. We are expressly told, that 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' Adding, "It is not pleaded that any truth or sentiment is communicated to the mind by the Spirit, besides what is already clearly revealed in the word; and the illumination of the Spirit is *to make men perceive and understand* that revelation which is already given, in its true light. But as to what that true light is, no man by any form of expression can effectually communicate that to his neighbour, any more than he can give him *a spiritual discernment*, which would be to perform the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit."* In another place he acknowledges, that "the scriptures always represent the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Spirit as exerted upon the *heart;* which includes not only the understanding, but the will and affections, or the prevalent inclinations and dispositions of the soul."†

According to these statements, the difference between the two controversialists, on this point, could not be considerable. They both maintain the idea of a previous principle, or of the soul's being rendered spiritual in order to its believing in Christ; and the difference lies not in the *necessity*, but in the *nature* of a previous change of mind; or whether it be proper to call it a principle, and to suppose it to include life as well as light. Mr. Fuller determines it to be a holy susceptibility; and Mr. Maclean, a spiritual perception; but both ascribe it to divine influence.

Mr. Fuller's "Strictures" are occupied on other topics, relative to the practices of the Sandemanian churches, which have no immediate connection with the present controversy, and ought not to be confounded with it. It is true the writer was clearly of opinion, that the Scottish Baptists, in general, had imbibed too much of the Sandemanian system, and was confirmed in that opinion by observing its effects among them, as well as amongst other denominations, during his repeated excursions to the north, as has already appeared from his Journal in a former chapter; yet it is evident that his leading design was rather to expose *the antichristian spirit* of the system, wherever it prevailed, than attack any particular class of its professors. And though he thought that Mr. Maclean retained so much of the savour of these principles, "as often to reason upon the ground of them, and to involve himself in numerous inconsistencies; yet he did not mean to suggest that his system was precisely that of Mr. Sandeman."‡ Justice, also, requires it to be said, that in several important articles

* Works, vol. iv. pp. 78, 80, 81. † Works, vol. ii. p. 91.
‡ Strictures, p. 151, Note.

there was a total disparity: and if the statement in the former part of this paper be found correct, Mr. Maclean was more nearly allied in sentiment to his opponent, than to the opposite party, with which he has been classed.

CHAPTER X.

The Socinian Controversy—Calvinistic and Socinian Systems examined and compared—Reply to Dr. Toulmin and Mr. Kentish—Universalist Controversy—Mr. Winchester—Letters to Mr. Vidler—Scrutator's Review—Deistical Controversy—French Infidels—Thomas Paine—The Gospel its own Witness—Missionary Controtroversy—Mr. Twining—Major Scott Waring—A Bengal Officer—Socinian Barrister—Dr. Barrow—Apology for the Missions.

It seldom falls to the lot of any author, however eminent, to be called into so wide a field of controversy, or to engage upwards of a dozen writers in succession, each distinguished in their several departments, and on a variety of subjects, connected, indeed, with religious interests, but demanding the most vigorous exercise of an acute and penetrating judgment, and an intimate acquaintance with the whole circle of polemical theology. Here it was that Mr. Fuller found himself at home; and the sacred scriptures, in which he constantly delighted, both supplied the place of science, and furnished him with those weapons which he wielded with such wonderful success.

In the preceding chapter, we saw him engaged in those minor disputations which exist among Christians; in this we behold him at war chiefly with the adversaries of revelation, with deists and semi-deists of various descriptions; some under the garb of christianity, and others naked to their shame. There he endeavoured to rectify the errors of a mistaken friend; here he sounds the alarm of an enemy in the camp, and wishes to unite all parties in the cause of God and truth. Nor were his zealous exertions, in conjunction with those of other denominations, vain or ineffectual. Infidelity has ceased to stalk in open day, and like the nightly pestilence, it is compelled to walk in darkness. The enemies of evangelical truth, if not reduced in number, are in full retreat; and instead of the vauntings of an arrogant and vain philosophy, are now heard the tender recitals of Missionary adventures, and the full cho-

rus of Bible institutions; whose sound is gone orth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

THE SOCINIAN CONTROVERSY.

Modern Socinianism, it has been said, is so unlike to Christianity, that it seems a matter of surprise it should ever have assumed the name, unless for the purpose of procuring for it a little religious reputation, and giving it a freer currency among the credulous. It contains, indeed, some portion of scriptural truth, and so does Judaism and Deism; but it has none of the features of genuine Christianity, and even Socinus himself would not have known by what name to distinguish it. It is evidently a system of scepticism, and not a religion of belief. It commences doubting—it lives by doubting—and it dies doubting. Uncertainty is connected with all its inquiries, and attends it in all the stages of its progress. The less you believe respecting Christ, the less you are afraid of Satan and of hell —the greater freedom you use with the Scriptures, and the more indifference you show to divine institutions—the better christian you become.

Yet at the commencement of the present controversy, the pretensions of its advocates were the most inordinate; and nothing but the exclusive title of Rational Christians would satisfy them. The great Goliah of the party, Dr. Priestly, was in the meridian of his days; and by a series of publications which were every year coming forward in rapid succession, he astonished the christian world by the boldness of his style, and his daring attacks upon the orthodox system. From calling in question the divinity of the Son of God, and the doctrine of his atonement for sin, he proceeded by regular gradations to undermine every important and valuable truth pertaining to the christian revelation, until he fearlessly impugned the inspiration of the holy scriptures—questioned the divine authority of such parts of them as militated against his hypothesis, represented the Saviour as peccable, and his apostles as inconclusive reasoners! Christians of all denominations stood aghast at the novelty and audacity of these speculations, and were literally panic struck at beholding this bold blasphemer defying the armies of Israel.

There had also been a previous union among Protestant Dissenters, in their application to Parliament for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, of which the Socinians

had availed themselves, and which soon became the source of various misconceptions. Serious men of the Established Church expressed their surprise, that some Dissenters could unite with others so opposite in their religious principles: not considering that the union was merely civil, and not of a religious nature. Others supposed that the majority of Dissenters had either imbibed the Socinian system, or were hastily approaching towards it. The famous Bishop Horsley was one who appeared to entertain this opinion. Dr. Priestly, at the same time, though he allowed the orthodox to be the most numerous body of Dissenters, insinuated that nine tenths of the general population would prefer a Unitarian to a Trinitarian liturgy. The arrogance of the Socinian party, in calling themselves *The* Dissenters, *The* modern Dissenters, together with their insidious attempts to disseminate their principles, and charging Calvinism with having an immoral tendency—produced a new state of things in the religious world.

At this juncture, an anonymous pamphlet made its appearance, written by the Rev. Samuel Palmer of Hackney, in a style remarkable for its temperance and candour, calling upon the friends of orthodoxy to stand forward and defend their principles, and to state clearly the genuine articles of the christian faith; pointing out at the same time the propriety of reviewing calmly and dispassionately the system of their venerable predecessors. It was also modestly hinted, that some things would be found scarcely tenable; and which, as belonging to the outposts, it would perhaps be wise in them to give up, for the sake of preserving the citadel.

This pamphlet made a strong impression on the public mind. It obtained high commendation from the Monthly Reviewers, in conducting whose journal at that time, Mr. Babcock had a considerable share, and who evidently took pains to second the object of this pamphlet. Mr. Fuller was now rising into public notice as a theological writer; and being alive to the interests and importance of divine truth, he felt the call thus made upon him as an individual, to attempt a defence of those doctrines which Socinianism was labouring to destroy. He had at that time many senior brethren in the ministry, to whom he looked up with becoming deference of respect. Little indeed was to be expected from the acute and ingenious Robinson, the versatility of whose mind had become sufficiently conspicuous, and whose fondness for novelty and paradox had given

him a predilection for the writings of Priestly; nor can it be doubted, that the treatment he received from the orthodox, contributed not a little to lessen his regard for their interests, and attach him to any society rather than their own.

Dr. Stennett, also, but from different motives, remained a silent spectator of the contest. Mr. Fuller determined, however, to make an effort; and having applied in vain to several of his brethren in the ministry for their assistance, he at length, in 1793, produced his celebrated work, entitled,

The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems examined and compared, as to their moral Tendency: in a Series of Letters addressed to the Friends of Vital and Practical Religion.

The clear and satisfactory nature of the argument employed, and the important effects resulting from this performance, have placed it in very high esteem, and procured an extensive circulation. For its appearance, however, in its present state, the public are much indebted to the venerable Booth, for a hint which he suggested to the author; who when he first undertook to examine the Socinian controversy, had sketched only a small pamphlet, divided into twelve sections. On viewing the manuscript, Mr. Booth recommended him to enlarge his plan, and to devote a whole letter to each topic: this he afterwards did, and carried on the series to the number of fifteen. Dr. John Fawcett, of Hebden Bridge, near Halifax, also concurred very heartily in the design, and communicated some valuable thoughts on 'Love to God,' which appear in Letter vii. This, however, is the sum total of the author's obligations.

Upon these topics he professedly reasons, both on the consequences that might naturally be *expected* from the adverse systems, and on the *actual* effects which they appeared to produce. He at the same time fairly considers the conduct of the general body of people that profess each system. He also finds occasion to examine and refute the pretension of Socinians to a great number of converts; and towards the conclusion, he detects the resemblance and tendency of Socinianism to Infidelity. Most of his arguments are deduced from matter of fact, obvious in itself, and often acknowledged by Socinian writers.

A summary of this able performance is given with such force and precision, after having established all his positions by a close and equitable comparison of the two systems, that we cannot better be made acquainted with its contents or the tenor of the reasoning, in so small a compass, than by quoting the words of the Author in his two concluding reflections.

"First: If that system which embraces the deity and atonement of Christ, with other correspondent doctrines, be friendly to a life of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness; it must be of God, and it becomes us to abide by it; not because it is the doctrine of Calvin, or of any other uninspired man, but as being *the gospel, which we have received* from Christ and his apostles; *wherein we stand, and by which we are saved.*

Secondly: If that system of religion which rejects the deity and atonement of Christ, with other correspondent doctrines, be unfriendly to the conversion of sinners to a life of holiness, and of professed unbelievers to faith in Christ; if it be a system which irreligious men are the first, and serious christians the last to embrace; if it be found to relax the obligations to virtuous affection and behaviour, by relaxing the standard of virtue itself; if it promote neither love to God under his true character, nor benevolence to men, as it is exemplified in the spirit of Christ and his apostles; if it lead those who embrace it to be wise in their own eyes, and instead of humbly deprecating God's righteous displeasure, even in their dying moments, arrogantly to challenge his justice; if the charity which it inculcates be founded in an indifference to divine truth: if it be inconsistent with ardent love to Christ, and veneration for the holy scriptures; if the happiness which it promotes be at variance with the joys of the gospel; and finally, if it diminished the motives to gratitude, obedience, and heavenly mindedness, and have a natural tendency to Infidelity,—it must be an immoral system, and consequently not of God. It is not the gospel of Christ, but *another gospel.* Those who preach it, preach *another Jesus*, whom the apostles did not preach; and those who receive it, receive *another spirit*, which they never imbibed. It is not the light which cometh from above, but a cloud of darkness that hath arisen from beneath, tending to eclipse it. It is not the high way of truth, which is a way of holiness, but a by-path of error, which misleads the unwary traveller; and of which, as we value our immortal interests, it becomes us to beware. We need not be afraid of evidence, or of free inquiry. For if irreligious men be the first, and serious christians the last who embrace the Socinian system; it is easy to perceive, that the avenues which lead to it are not, as its abettors would persuade us to think, an openness to conviction, or a free and impartial inquiry after truth; but a heart secretly disaffected to the true character of God, and dissatisfied with the gospel way of salvation."

The Socinians have never been able fairly to meet this performance, or to defend their own system, on the principle which it adopts; but pretending to rest their cause on the literality of scripture evidence, they have betrayed a conviction that it would be more easy to puzzle plain

and serious Christians by overbearing assertions and plausible subterfuges, about the sense of detached passages in the Bible, than to persuade them that the body of Socinians in general is to be set in competition for practical godliness with that of Calvinists.

The religious world at large will doubtless retain a lasting sense of their obligation to the Author, for his vivid representation of the leading doctrines of the Christian System, and for his perspicuous and striking display of an argument in their defence, so accessible to general comprehension and observation; and will gratefully acknowledge, that the manner in which the investigation was conducted, happily comports with the genius and the spirit of genuine Christianity. The Author himself felt peculiar satisfaction in the part he had taken on this occasion. "By what I have read and written," said he, "in the Socinian controversy, I feel more attached to the great doctrines of Christ's deity and atonement, together with that of salvation by grace alone from first to last. These truths are not merely the objects of my faith, but the ground of all my hope; and administer what is superior to my daily bread."*

Socinianism Indefensible, on the Ground of its moral Tendency: containing a Reply to Dr. Toulmin and Mr. Kentish. 1797.

After having exhibited several heavy charges against the Calvinistic system, as being unfriendly to benevolent affections and virtuous behaviour, it was not to be expected that the advocates of Socinianism would all at once decline to make good their charges, or to accept the challenge of examining their own system upon the same ground; much less that they would hesitate to admit the validity of such a test. At the time that Mr. Fuller's examination of the Calvinistic and Socinian systems first made its appearance, so much regard was entertained for moral principle, that some of the most respectable characters among them acknowledged that the work was "well worthy of their attention."

Dr. Priestly, it was said, refused to read it, notwithstanding it contained frequent reference to what he had published; and not till after three years, when several

* Baptist Magazine, 1816. p. 455.

editions were in circulation, was any answer attempted. Dr. Toulmin, indeed, had no doubt, "that the gentlemen, on passages in whose writings many of our Author's reflections were grounded, were every way equal to the contest, if they saw fit to enter the lists with him." Their not having done this, Dr. Toulmin comes forward with his "Practical Efficacy of the Unitarian doctrine;" but he was scarcely a breakfast for his antagonist. He completed his answer to Dr. Toulmin and Mr. Kentish in a few days; observing at the time he was writing it, that he could see his way clearly through the subject; and that it would cost him more labour to reply to a single letter, such as he was in the habit of receiving from some close thinking Scots, than to answer half a dozen such writers as these.

Before Dr. Toulmin could undertake what he thought so easy of achievement, he was obliged to shift the *ground* of the contest, and virtually to give up the principle, that the moral tendency of a doctrine is a fair criterion of its truth; and to maintain on the contrary, that we are not to ask by *whom* any system is professed, but to confine ourselves to the single inquiry, by what *evidence* it is supported. The doctor, and his coadjutor in the same cause, had a right to rest the evidence in favour of their system on what ground they pleased; but neither in truth, nor in literary justice, had they any right to consider their work as an answer to Mr. Fuller's performance.

In a new edition of his pamphlet, Dr. Toulmin is at length reduced to the necessity of acknowledging, that "he did not intend to give a full and minute answer" to his opponent, but only to bring the Unitarian doctrine to the test of scriptural facts. Mr. Fuller afterwards noticed the unfairness of Dr. Toulmin's conduct, exposed the futility of his arguments, and established the legitimacy of the principle on which he had rested his performance, in a postscript to a new and enlarged edition of his Calvinistic and Socinian Systems compared, as to their moral tendency; and here ended the part he had taken in this controversy.

Three or four years afterwards, an ignorant and intemperate man, who formerly professed orthodox principles which he never understood, as he himself acknowledged, went over to the Socinian standard, and addressed a printed Letter to Mr. Fuller. This auxiliary publication falling into the hands of one of the most distinguished characters

amongst the Socinians, he was pleased to recommend it to some of his brethren, and hoped that it would convert even the Author of the Systems compared; though it abounded in false assertions, misrepresentations, and the lowest species of scurrility.

Perceiving the complete triumph which had been gained over his opponents, who, having felt to their cost, the disadvantage of bringing their scheme to the test of its moral efficacy, and afterwards appealing to the Scriptures, "rightly understood, and critically explained," could, notwithstanding, descend from these heights to fraternize with a scribbler who was really unable to write a single paragraph of common sense, and exalt him to the rank of a champion, provoked the risibility of Mr. Fuller to such a degree, that he could not forbear exclaiming—"Poor Socinianism! Through the straitness of the siege wherewith thine enemies have besieged thee, *an ass's head is sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver!*"

This controversy may now be considered as settled, so far, at least, as relates to the present ground of argument. Mr. Belsham used to make great boast of the practical efficacy of their system; but after Dr. Toulmin and Mr. Kentish had received their quietus, he was willing to relinquish that point, or, at least, did not defend it; but said on behalf of himself and his coadjutors, that "they would not trespass upon the *holy* ground." There is, therefore, no longer any necessity for carrying on this warfare; the friends of evangelical truth are in legal possession, and have only to improve those advantages which the contest has ensured, by adding to their faith, virtue, brotherly kindness, and charity. If Socinianism still lives, it owes its existence to controversy, and maintains itself by the logical dexterity of its defenders. Like the apocalyptic beast, it appears with its head wounded to death, and is going fast to perdition.

THE UNIVERSALIST CONTROVERSY.

The apostle of Universalism was Mr. Winchester, minister of a dissenting congregation in London; and being a man of rather popular talents, and pleasing manners, he drew together a considerable number of hearers, and made some proselytes. Novelty, in any dress, always finds admirers; but when adorned in the garb of Universal Salva-

tion,—promising eternal life to those who die in their sins, after suffering a paternal chastisement in a future state, to qualify them for heaven, it cannot fail of obtaining many votaries. Yet, however corrupt men may be in practice, and however desirous of believing a doctrine so congenial with their depravity, they do not all at once give up those opinions in which they have been educated, and which appear to be sanctioned by the word of God itself. In order, therefore, to effect any considerable success, all those plain and numerous passages of scripture which threaten destruction to the finally impenitent, must first be disposed of. The expedient is easy. It is only necessary to intimate, that the Bible, as it is in common use, is not the language in which the scriptures were originally written; then to assert that the men who translated the Bible into English were strongly prejudiced in favour of many false doctrines, and that they have given such an interpretation as best suited their own errors: moreover, that they were ignorant men, who knew nothing of modern improvements in learning, and have committed many of the grossest mistakes. This done, all confidence in the English Bible is taken away, and nothing more is necessary but to affirm that it is so and so in the original.

This expedient Mr. Winchester adopted: he professed as great a veneration for the Bible as any man; but not the Bible as it is read by Englishmen, but in *Hebrew* and *Greek*. By these and similar means he made a number of converts; and universal salvation, among a certain class, became the order of the day. Mr. Winchester however did not formally renounce what are usually considered the essentials of christianity, though the arguments by which he supported universalism tended to their subversion. He also paved the way, perhaps undesignedly, for what has since taken place. He taught, by his frequent references to the original, in support of his doctrine, that no dependence was to be placed on the English Bible, and prepared his hearers to receive whatever sentiments the learned should think right to declare were contained in the original scriptures. By this means they found, that *one* doctrine which seemed to be plainly enough taught in their Bibles, was false; and then, why might not others be false, which seemed equally plain.

Mr. Vidler, who had formerly been pastor of the Baptist church at Battle, in Sussex, afterwards succeeded Mr. Winchester, and found a people exactly prepared for him.

This gentleman so infinitely outdid all the doings of his predecessor, as to cause the name of Winchester soon to be forgotten. Universal salvation is now scarcely ever heard of, except as the first step which lead to greater discoveries. They now see that there is no truth in the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sin; that Jesus was no more than a man, and the son of Joseph; that the soul is material, and sleeps till the morning of the resurrection. They are also learned in the doctrine of philosophical necessity; and as for Greek, it is perfectly familiar; even some of the ladies speak it as grammatically as they do English. It is no wonder therefore that this new literati should style themselves the avowed enemies of bigotry, and the friends of free inquiry: they are candid, rational, and liberal, and entertain the most benevolent sentiments towards infidels; pitying them as being driven to infidelity, by the absurdities maintained by what we are called orthodox christians. They entertain the most sanguine hopes of bringing these well-disposed, but mistaken unbelievers, over to rational religion—if these should not get the start of them, and bring them over to infidelity. How near Mr. Vidler approached to this system of impiety, it is impossible to say; but in his progress he acknowledged to one of his most intimate friends, that he considered *prayer* to be a most unphilosophical exercise; and that if the prejudices of his congregation did not prevent, he should wish to dispense with it altogether in public worship.

As soon as it was understood that Mr. Vidler had embraced the doctrine of universal salvation, Mr. Fuller was desirous of arresting his progress: accordingly, in February, 1793, he addressed to Mr. V. an expostulatory letter, entreating him to consider the pernicious tendency of those principles, and to "beware of the whirlpool of Socinianism." Mr. V. made no reply; and as the letter contained nothing of a private nature, it was inserted in the Evangelical Magazine two years afterwards, under the signature of Gaius. Presuming that Mr. V. would attempt to maintain his new system on the ground of his predecessors, this letter embraced the following questions—(1) Whether Mr. V.'s change of sentiment did not arise from an idea that endless punishment was in itself *unjust*—(2) Whether the genius of the sentiment in question be not opposite to that of every other sentiment in the Bible—(3) Whether Mr. V.'s ministrations, on this principle, will not savour

of his who taught our first parents, "ye shall not surely die."

In 1797, when Mr. V. commenced editor of the Universalist Miscellany, he was anxious to engage Mr. F. in a controversy, and inserted a letter in the first two numbers of the work, stating that Mr. F.'s questions had no more reference to the doctrine of the Universalists, than to that of election. Supposing also that the doctrine of endless punishment rests entirely on the meaning of the words *ever, everlasting, &c.* he attempted to prove that these are words of *indefinite* meaning, which cannot be ascertained but by the subject to which they relate. He then brought forward the reasons which induced him to adopt his present system.

Proceeding in the discussion, Mr. V. endeavours to evade the first inquiry, maintaining that the question is not whether endless punishment be in itself *just*, but whether God has any where threatened any description of sinners with it. Mr. Fuller meets this inquiry in his Fifth Letter, containing four sources of scriptural proof of the doctrine of endless punishment, with his remarks on each; and it may be doubted whether such a mass of striking and satisfactory evidence on this subject has ever been exhibited, within the same compass, in the English language. The first source of evidence is derived from those passages of scripture which describe the future states of men in contrast; from which Mr. Fuller reasons, that the state of the righteous, which is opposed to that of the wicked, is allowed to be final, and if that of the wicked were not the same, it would not have been contrasted with it, for it would not be a contrast. He also pleads that the passages quoted are totally silent, as to any other state of following that of condemnation and future punishment; and that the phraseology of the greater part of them is inconsistent with the notion of any other state following that which they describe. His second species of evidence consists of those scriptures which speak of the duration of future punishment by the terms 'everlasting, eternal, for ever, and for ever and ever.' His third, all those passages which express the duration of future punishment by implication, or by forms of speech which imply the doctrine in question. The last body of evidence is drawn from those scriptures which teach that the change of heart, and a preparedness for heaven, are confined to the present life.

Mr. V. had previously allowed that the future state of the righteous was final; and that as their life and blessedness flow naturally from God, in whom are all our springs, it would be like him, *eternal* in duration. But being overwhelmed with the evidence which his opponent had adduced, he had now no other way of extricating himself, than by alleging that the state of the *righteous* had not been proved to be final, nor that if the state of the wicked be not final; it would not be contrasted with that of the righteous. He was willing indeed to admit, that the final state of the righteous might be elsewhere expressed, and taught on other grounds; but contended that the words 'eternal' and 'everlasting' proved nothing to the purpose.

The remainder of the controversy is chiefly occupied in investigating these and similar terms, in reference to the doctrine of future punishment. The words 'ever, everlasting, and eternal,' meaning no more in Mr. V.'s creed than 'age, agelasting, or ages,' he was requested to fix on a term that would better express unlimited duration. He therefore selects for this purpose the word *endless*, and professes that he should have been satisfied of the truth of his opponent's doctrine, if this term had been associated with it in the Scriptures, referring at the same time to Heb. vii. 16; where, unfortunately, it is used in a limited sense, and restricted to the period of Christ's mediation. Mr. F. shows that it is not in the power of language to convey any definite idea, according to Mr. V.'s code of interpretation; and if a subject is not to be understood by the terms in which it is expressed, but the terms by the previous ideas which any one attaches to the subject, or if terms themselves have no specific or proper meaning, there is no hope of understanding any thing, either in common speech or in holy writ.

The various shifts and evasions attempted by Mr. V. in the course of this disputation, rendered it extremely irksome to Mr. F. to proceed, and he did it with great reluctance. He found that he had to do, as he said, with a 'gross and subtle sophist,' whose understanding was perverted by a system, which rendered him inaccessible to evidence. He was also much disgusted with the literary pretensions of his antagonist, whose utmost acquirements he thought did not go far beyond the Greek alphabet; and not professing a critical acquaintance with the original languages himself, he judged it would become them both to write in English. Mr. V. took fire at this, and scornfully suggested to Mr. F. that he might have been contented in confessing his *own* ig-

norance. In spite of this counsel, he continued to figure away in Hebrew and Greek; and poor Mr. F. was obliged to follow him as well as he was able. After the dispute was ended, his papers were reprinted in a separate pamphlet, entitled—

Letters to Mr. Vidler, on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation. 1802.

This publication closed Mr. Fuller's part in the present contest. But a clergyman, under the title of Scrutator, who had been a strict observer of every thing that passed, and had watched the direction of every blow, being provoked at the groundless pretensions of Mr. V. and hurt by his ignorant and irreverent freedoms with holy writ, resolved to expose him to the religious and literary world. He therefore published "Letters to a Universalist; containing a Review of the Controversy between Mr. Vidler and Mr. Fuller on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation." And true it is, he has stripped the sciolist of all his plumes, and turned him out, and his cause with him, naked to their shame.—The following are some of his concluding reflections:

"What are we to think of the man, who with such consummate effrontery, not only charges the commonly received translation with being false,—but appeals to 'every proper judge' for the genuineness of a translation, the most glaringly contradictory, ungrammatical, and absurd, that perhaps ignorance ever ventured to publish; and that too, when he must have known that the authority of the greatest names that ever adorned real science, was directly against him; and without the suffrage of a single scholar to keep him in countenance. Let him hide his face in confusion. His trash did not deserve so much attention; but I measured its importance by the mischief it might do amongst unlettered readers. I cannot help expressing an an honest indignation against the man who undermines the common christian's faith, by insinuating that his English Bible is a *false* transcript of the original. When I contrast their venerable names and *real* learning with the half-taught scholars of modern times, who, having just learned to distinguish *alpha* from *beta*, take upon them to criticise, and unceremoniously to cashier them, I blush at the mention of learning, and loathe the name of science.

Were I to recal to your recollection the proofs I have given of his misrepresentation, his ungenerous disavowal of sentiments, which he maintained at the beginning of the controversy, his petulant illiberality, his unsupported pretensions to candour and impartiality, it might look like indulging a vindictive spirit, against which I solemnly appeal. I have no enmity whatever against the *man*: it is simply against the *writer* that all my animadversions are aimed: and if the representation here given of the disputant, should operate to the advantage of the man, I shall think myself well repaid for the trouble I

have taken in this Review. I entreat you, look well to yourself. Make a voluntary surrender, if you please, of your understanding; take the self-confident, the smatterer in knowledge, the noisy boaster of superior candour and discernment, as your guide, in things that pertain to the present life; sacrifice every thing that is dear to you of a finite duration; but, make a reserve of your *soul!*"

THE DEISTICAL CONTROVERSY.

A spirit of infidelity has existed in all ages of the world; but it was not till within a century after the Reformation that it made its appearance in this country under a systematic form. Lord Herbert is said to have been the first English deist who inveighed against the inspiration of the Scriptures, and openly defended the principles of infidelity; but to avoid the odium of such a proceeding, his publications were both in Latin, and first printed on the continent. He maintained that there is but one God, that he is chiefly to be worshipped, that piety and virtue are the principal parts of his worship, that God will pardon sins on repentance, and that there are rewards for the good, and punishments for the wicked in a future state; and that these were sentiments commonly acknowledged by all nations.

Lord Herbert was soon followed by a number of other writers, who, each in his turn, assailed the bulwarks of Christianity. Among the principal of these, in later times, were Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Bolingbroke, Morgan, Gibbon, and Hume. Deism now assumed a grosser form; not only was the sufficiency of the light of nature acknowledged, and the necessity of a supernatural revelation totally denied, but along with it the existence of a providence and of a future state, and every distinction between moral good and evil. Christianity, and even common morality, being assaulted by such inveterate adversaries, numerous defenders arose for their support; amongst the most distinguished of whom, are Chandler, Lardner, and Leland, whose voluminous writings have acquired the highest celebrity.

Soon after the commencement of the French Revolution, the spirit of infidelity again revived, and Christianity was outrageously treated as an imposture. The prevailing party in France, having possessed themselves of the power of the state, made every exertion to efface from the public mind, all ideas of religion and morality; and in one instance, an attempt was made for restoring something like the ancient idolatry. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul,

or a future state of rewards and punishments, was publickly ridiculed, and the people were taught to believe that death was an everlasting sleep. 'The Temple of Reason' was inscribed on the churches, in contempt of Divine Revelation; atheistical and licentious homilies were published instead of the old service, and a ludicrous imitation of the Greek mythology exhibited under the title of the 'Religion of Reason.' Infidelity was carried to such an excess, that they even dressed up a common harlot with the most fantastic decorations, whom they blasphemously styled 'the Goddess of Reason:' and having placed her on an altar in the church, whither she was escorted by the constituted authorities, they harangued the people, who in return professed the deepest adoration, and sung several songs in honour of the goddess. This horrid scene was concluded by burning the prayer-book, the confessional, and every thing appropriated to the use of public worship.

Amidst the temporary triumphs of 'the Temple of Reason,' 'the Religion of Reason,' and 'the Goddess of Reason,' Thomas Paine's 'Age of Reason' made its appearance; and, favoured by various political circumstances, it diffused a spirit of infidelity throughout the country. The low state of religion in general, the long reign of darkness in the Established Church, the prevalence of Hyper-calvinism amongst one class of Dissenters, the bold and daring efforts of Socinianism in another, together with the eager interests felt by political partizans, in the revolutionary movements of the day, left but little to resist the torrent of infidelity, which poured in from the neighbouring continent.

Several able answers were written to Paine's popular and pernicious pamphlet; but its effects were widely and deeply felt. The general qualities of this writer, both in reference to his political and deistical publications, were once described by Mr. Fuller in the following terms. "He possesses strong powers of mind; but his prejudices are stronger than his faculties. His imagination is vivid, but extremely impure: his language is forcible, but grossly offensive; his endowments are chiefly natural, and on this account his vanity is intolerable. The strength and energy of his conceptions would render him a convincing reasoner; but the moral qualities of his mind in most cases forbid it. Malignant passions, violent prejudices, and a vain desire of displaying his wit, must, in proportion as they operate, disqualify him for just reasoning, let his talents be what

they may. In fine, his genius is much more adapted to demolish, than to build up. His talents are formed for exposing the ills of human society, rather than for encouraging the good. Reproach is his element: if he can find truth on which to ground it, it is very well; but if not, his jaundiced mind can supply that deficiency, and give a colour to every object of dislike according to his wishes. He is a plant that will not flourish either by the rains of heaven, or the natural fertility of the earth: it is only by the putrid effluvia of the dunghill that he can live."

In publishing an answer to this profane and sarcastic writer, Mr. Fuller takes occasion to review the principles of deistical writers in general, in contrast with the doctrines of revealed religion; and omitting various points in dispute between Christians and Infidels, relative to historical facts which had been ably discussed by other writers, he confines himself chiefly to the internal evidence which Christianity possesses, and brings the opposite system to the test of its moral tendency. His valuable work on this subject is accordingly entitled,—

The Gospel its own Witness; or the Holy Nature and Divine Harmony of the Christian Religion, contrasted with the Immorality and Absurdity of Deism. 1800.

In reviewing the lives and the labours of deistical authors, he finds that while they acknowledge the existence of one Supreme Being, they overlook or deny his moral character, ascribing to him little more than the attributes of power and wisdom, and with admirable consistency refusing to worship him. Such, also, is the tendency of their system, that it loosens all the bonds of society, by subverting the principles of moral obligation, placing the essence of virtue in self-love, or, at most, in the love of our species, without any reference to supreme authority, and reducing vice merely to what is personally inconvenient, or socially injurious.

Lord Shaftesbury says, virtue is an affection for the whole of our species: Lord Bolingbroke says, it is only the love of ourselves: Volney says, it is every thing that tends to preserve and perfect man: Hume says, it is whatever is useful in society: Paine says, it is endeavouring to make our fellow creatures happy. But God is not in all their thoughts.

In the lives of these men every species of iniquity is tolerated, and their enmity to the Gospel is found to arise from its holy nature. Herbert, Hobbes, Shaftesbury, Morgan, Chubb, and Voltaire, the decided enemies of Christianity, were all guilty of the vilest hypocrisy, and justified themselves in the most deliberate falsehoods. Woolston was a gross blasphemer; Tindal was infamous for vice in general; Rousseau was a thief, by his own confession; Paine was a profane swearer, and a drunkard; and Hume died as a fool dieth. The day before his death he spent in a pitiful and affected unconcern about this tremendous subject, playing at cards, reading profane books, and making silly attempts at wit, concerning his interview with Charon, the heathen ferryman of Hades. Paine, also, flattered himself that his principles would bear him up in the prospect of death; but recent accounts have testified that he died under deep remorse, and in the agonies of despair.

In opposition to the immorality of these men, and the absurdity of their sentiments, in making virtue to consist in something independent of the dispositions of the mind, Mr. Fuller observes, that it is a distinguishing property of the Bible, that all its precepts extend directly to the heart: it is the heart that they require: and all the different forms of worship and obedience which they prescribe, are only so many modifications or varied expressions of it. Considering the evil of sin as arising merely from the mischief it does to society, these writers make the essence of it to consist, not in the intention, but the action. Mr. Fuller, on the contrary, considers the action as nothing, any farther than as it carries the intention into execution. After having proved that the divine law is summed up in *love*, and that this principle is competent to the government of the whole creation, and, if obeyed, would render every intelligent creature happy: he demands of his adversaries whether they can produce any principle to be compared with it. The answer is, No: their deity takes no cognizance of the heart. According to them, there is neither merit nor crime in intention; their morality only goes to form the exterior of man. It allows the utmost scope for evil desires, provided they be not carried into execution. Mr. F. then exhibits, at full view, the pure and holy principles of the gospel, their influence on society, and in the formation of character; their tendency to promote benevolence, to alleviate the sorrows, and enhance the felicity of the present

state. On the latter of these subjects is the following impressive paragraph:

"Where but in the gospel, will you find relief under the innumerable ills of the present life? This is the well known refuge of Christians. Are they poor, afflicted, persecuted, or reproached? They are led to consider him who endured the contradiction of sinners, who lived a life of poverty and ignominy, who endured persecution and reproach, and death itself for them; and to realize a blessed immortality in prospect. By a view of such things their hearts are cheered, and their afflictions become tolerable. Looking to Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God, they run with patience the race that is set before them.—But what is the comfort of unbelievers? Life being short, and having no ground to hope for any thing beyond it, if they be crossed here, they become inconsolable. Hence it is not uncommon for persons of this description, after the example of the philosophers and statesmen of Greece and Rome, when they find themselves depressed by adversity, and have no prospect of retrieving their fortunes, to put a period to their lives. Unhappy men! Is this the felicity to which ye would introduce us? Is it in guilt, shame, remorse, and desperation that ye descry such charms? Admitting that *our* hope of immortality is visionary, where is the injury? If it be a dream, is it not a pleasant one? To say the least, it beguiles many a melancholy hour, and can do no mischief: but, if it be a reality—what will become of you!"

The harmony of the christian religion is next considered, as an evidence of its divinity; and the agreement of prophecy with the historical fact is strikingly pointed out. The same events must have been noticed by former writers, but perhaps at no time with so much effect; the evidence is irresistible. The correspondence of the Holy Scriptures with living truth, or with things as they actually exist in the mind, and in the world; the simplicity and sublimity of their style, the holy unction that rests on every page, all furnish sources of argument in favour of their inspiration. There is nothing in the sacred writings to gratify presumptuous speculation or idle curiosity, nothing to excite levity or folly; they are free from affectation and vanity, are never known to flatter the great, and discover no anxiety to guard against seeming inconsistencies; but leave the truth to commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. "There is something in all they say, which leaves behind it a sensation produced by no other writings; something peculiarly suited to the mind when in its most serious frames, oppressed by affliction, or thoughtful above a future life; some thing which gives melancholy itself a charm, and produces tears more delicious to the mind than the most

high-flavoured earthly enjoyments. It is a savour of life, a savour of God, an unction from the Holy One."

The elucidation of the scripture doctrine of salvation through a Mediator, and its consistency with sober reason, is singularly clear and satisfactory; but the last chapter of the work, which maintains its consistency with the modern opinion of the magnitude of creation, exhibits a train of thought which may bear a comparison with any thing that has been written on this subject in the English language. The Christian here attacks the deist in his strong hold, takes complete possession of it, and plants the banner of the cross on the very spot where infidelity had presented its brazen front. The magnitude of creation, let it be as extensive as it may, serves only to illustrate the sublimer doctrine of redemption and forms a temple for its praise.—The work concludes with faithful and affectionate addresses to Deists, Jews and Christians, on their obligations towards the Gospel revelation.

This publication was received with very general applause. The excellent Mr. Wilberforce expressed his cordial approbation of it, and deemed it the most important of all the author's works. The Rev. John Newton, of St. Mary, Woolnoth, said he had so often recommended it, that he thought at least a hundred copies had been purchased by his acquaintances. Some gentlemen made pecuniary offers for a cheap edition at a reduced price, in order to give it a more extensive circulation; but Mr. Fuller declined accepting their contributions. The Rev. Rob. Hall observed, that this work "displayed an extraordinary force of understanding; and that the two chapters on the atonement, were alone sufficient to make the writer immortal."

THE MISSIONARY CONTROVERSY.

The Deists have had their day, and it is over. If they make any appearance now, it is under the garb of Christianity. Unable to keep their ground in the field of open controversy, they were for trying what they could effect by means of a practical opposition on the plains of India, and by imparting to the government their apprehensions for the fate of the eastern empire, if the true religion should be suffered to prevail. Some of them who had had the mortification of beholding the successful exertions of the Missionaries, about the time that the massacre happened at Velore, seized on this and other cotemporary circumstances, for the

purpose of spreading an alarm; though in fact they had no more connection with the mission, than the building of Tenderten steeple in Latimer's time had with the flowing of the tide upon the Kentish shore.

Several of these gentlemen returned to England, with indictments ready prepared, and only wanted the assistance of some able advocates. The first who presented himself was Mr. Twining, of famous memory, who addressed a Letter to the Chairman of the East India Company protesting against "interfering in the religious opinions of the natives of India, and deprecating the consequences which might arise from such an attempt."

Next followed Major Scott Waring, with "Observations on the present state of the East India Company;" and having received alarming intelligence from gentlemen lately returned from India, he "humbly submits to the consideration of his Majesty's Ministers, the East India Company, and the Legislature, a plan for restoring that confidence which the natives formerly reposed in the justice and policy of the British government, as to the security of their religion, laws, and local customs;" and this plan was, "the immediate recal of every English missionary, and a prohibition to all persons dependent on the Company from giving assistance to the translation or circulation of the Holy Scriptures." And what have these missionaries done, said Mr. Fuller, that they are to be immediately recalled; and these Holy Scriptures, that they are not to be translated or circulated by any one dependent on the Company? As to the former, it is not pretended that they had any hand in the tragical event at Velore; and as to the latter, no accusation has yet been brought against them. The impolicy of Dr. Buchanan's visit to the Syrian Christians, is also urged; and it gave serious offence to the Major, that the epithet "important," should be attached to any inquiry relating to Christianity. He calls it "the most trifling of all possible subjects connected with the welfare of our oriental empire." He likewise speaks of this empire as being "conquered by British valour." God and religion, therefore, could have nothing to do with it. No, let the missionaries go to Africa, to the South Sea Islands, or to the wilds of America; but let them not come hither! *Oh thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there; but prophesy not again any more in Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court.* Yet this gentleman would be thought after

all, to be a Christian; and "trusts it will not be imputed to indifference for the eternal welfare of the people of India," that he advises what he does! He farther alleges that the "late Bishop of St. Asaph, a sound and orthodox divine, and one of the main pillars of our good old Church of England, deprecated all such interference." His Letter to the Chairman concludes with several invectives against the missionaries.

A Bengal Officer completes the triad, by publishing "A Vindication of the Hindoos;" stating the excellency of their moral system, and the danger of interfering with their customs or religion. And in the true style of Brahmanism, he becomes the apologist, and even the admirer of their shasters, their temples, and their idols. He calls for the persecution of Christianity in the east, more loudly than his coadjutors; and expresses his apprehensions that if the Bible be not proscribed, and the missionaries expelled, all the Europeans in the east will become the victims of Dhoorga. As if on an expedition against some rebellious rajah, this Bengal officer dashes after the missionaries through thick and thin, determined at all events to vindicate his beloved Hindoos, and to exterminate the adversaries of their exalted religion. These gentlemen are all of them sufficiently alarmed for their commercial interests in India, but are utterly regardless of the souls of fifty millions of heathens, living under the same government with themselves. Whether the real devil, or the imaginary Cali, take them, appears to be no part of their concern, provided Jesus Christ has nothing to do with them.

These publications were soon followed by a second and a third pamphlet from the pen of Major Scott Waring, repeating and affirming the same things, with a profusion of additional invective. An anonymous "Letter" also made its appearance, addressed to "the President of the Board of Control, on the propagation of Christianity in India;" recommending that the vigilant control of the India Governments, should keep pace with the growing zeal of this country, for the conversion of the natives of Hindostan.

About the same time, Dr. Barrow published his "Sermon," which had been delivered before "the University of Oxford; on the propriety of *confining* Missionary undertakings to the Established Church;" and recommending "one uniform and general attempt, *to the exclusion of all others*, where we have the power to exclude them,

to be made by the ministers of the national church, under the authority and regulations of an act of the legislature."

Among those who contributed their aid in the present contest, were the *Edinburgh Reviewers*, who professed a desire to "use their feeble endeavours in assisting the public judgment on those topics to which its attention was actually directed; and for this purpose they make their first attack on Methodism, and the next on missions. Under the former term they include in one undistinguished mass, "the sentiments of the Arminian and Calvinistic Methodists, and of the *evangelical* clergymen of the church of England;" whom they describe as three classes of fanatics, "engaged in one general conspiracy against common sense and rational orthodox Christianity!"

Anxious for the preservation of Paganism and Mahometanism abroad, and of Heathenism at home, from the attacks of Evangelical ministers and missionaries, *A Barrister* joins this goodly fraternity, and offers his "Hints to the public and the legislature, on the nature and effect of evangelical preaching;" while the rest were employed in submitting "A plan to his Majesty's Ministers, the East India Company, and the Legislature," proposing to recal every English missionary, and to limit the circulation of the scriptures. Not knowing what to do with these Evangelical men, they humbly request the GOVERNMENT to take them in hand; while they themselves wish to be thought the friends, and almost the only friends of reason and toleration.

This collision of parties produced considerable agitation in the public mind; and Mr. Twining having promised to bring the missionary business before a Court of Proprietors at the India House, called up Mr. Fuller to town, in December, 1807, where he answered Mr. Twining's pamphlet, and watched the progress of the enemy. The Court dismissed Mr. Twining's proposition, declining to interfere with the propagation of Christianity in India; and Mr. Fuller resumed his pen, in answer to Major Scott Waring, and the rest of the anti-missionaries.* Three pamphlets quickly succeeding each other, under the previous inspection of some gentleman of high distinction, made their appearance in 1808, entitled—

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* Farther particulars of this campaign are given in Chapter v. pp. 141—146.

An Apology for the late Christian Missions to India.

After reading the publications of these anti-missionaries, Mr. Fuller said he had rather pray for them than write against them; but being compelled to enter this field of literary warfare, he expressed his opinion of the importance of the controversy in the following just and striking remarks—

"It appears to be the design of Providence, by a succession of events, to effect a more marked distinction between the friends and enemies of religion, than has of late years subsisted. Through a variety of causes they have long been confounded. As though there were no standard for either side to repair to, they have each mingled with the other in a sort of promiscuous mass.

The effect of this junction has been more unfavourable to the cause of Christ, than to that of his enemies. Hence it appears to be the will of God, by his inscrutable providence, to effect a closer union among christians, and a more marked separation between them and their adversaries. As though some decisive conflict were about to take place, the hosts on each side seem to be mustering for the battle.

The French Revolution, (that mighty shaking of the church and of the world) has been productive of this among other effects. Great numbers, who had before passed as Christians, perceiving infidelity to be coming into fashion, avowed their unbelief. Many of these, however, finding afterwards that they had mistaken the road to preferment, turned about, and assumed to be the patrons of *rational and orthodox christianity*. Serious Christians of different denominations, on the other hand, felt a new motive to unite in defence of the common faith in which they are agreed.

The same effect has been produced by the sending out of missions to the heathen. The effort itself excited a correspondence of feeling, a communication of sentiment, and a unity of action, and that to a great extent: and now that success has in some measure attended it, it has drawn against it a host of adversaries. As the assembling of Israel before the Lord in Mizpeh, though they had neither sword nor spear among them, excited the jealousy of the Philistines, and drew forth their armies in the hope of crushing them at the outset; so it is at this day. It is remarkable what a tendency the genuine exercises of true religion have to manifest the principles of men, and to draw them into union, either on the side of Christ, or on that of his enemies. You may now perceive Deists, Socinians, and others, who retain the form of christianity but deny the power, naturally falling into their ranks on one side: and serious Christians, almost forgetting their former differences, as naturally uniting on the other. I question whether there ever was a controversy since the days of the apostles, in which religion and irreligion were more clearly marked, and their respective adherents more distinctly organised."

The solemn warning addressed to those in authority, in the author's letter to the Chairman of the East India Company, relative to the insidious attempts of unbelievers, to

prevent the evangelizing of the idolatrous Hindoos, is too important to be overlooked, and affords an instance of fidelity worthy of the cause in which it was exerted.

"Whatever measures may be taken by men who have become aliens from that which is the glory of their country," says Mr. Fuller, "I trust there will be found a sufficient number of the rulers and inhabitants of this land to counteract them. If not, let us talk as we may against French atheism, we are fast sinking into it.—If, Sir, there be a God that judgeth in the earth, the danger lies in making *Him* our enemy. It is a principle which cannot be disputed, however it may be disregarded, *that whatever is right, is wise; and whatever is wrong, is foolish and dangerous.* Sir, the tombs of nations, successively buried in oblivion, have this truth inscribed on every one of them:—It was by forbidding christian ministers to speak unto the Gentiles that they might be saved, that the most favoured nation upon earth filled up the measure of its sins, and drew upon it the wrath of heaven to the uttermost.'

At a time, Sir, when many and great nations are overthrown; nations which have not possessed our privileges, and therefore have not incurred our guilt; when we are engaged in the most tremendous struggle that this country ever knew; and when on certain occasions we profess to fast, and to humble ourselves before Almighty God; shall we raise from its slumbers the wicked system of *persecution?* 'Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?'

Mr. Twining may be disgusted at the idea of the Eastern empire being given us by Providence, *for the very purpose* of introducing the gospel; but if it be so, it is no more than God's having formerly given it to Cyrus *for Jacob his servant's sake.* Men may scorn to be subservient to their Maker; but whether they consent or not, it will be so. The conquests of Rome made way for the introduction of christianity into Britain; and those of Britain may make way for its general introduction in the East. Should Britain be friendly to this object, it may be the lengthening of her tranquillity; but as an eloquent writer observes, "If we decline the illustrious appointment, God may devolve on some less refractory people those high destinies which might have been ours. *Who knoweth whether we are come to the kingdom for such a time as this? If we altogether hold our peace at this time, then may there enlargement and deliverance arise to them from another place; and we and our father's house may be destroyed.*"*

While engaged in this arduous contest, Mr. Fuller received no material assistance, except from one quarter, much as he desired it; but was left to maintain the conflict alone, and had to produce his voluminous pamphlets in the course only of a few weeks. The Rev. Adam Clarke, L. L. D. kindly tendered his "Remarks" on the Vindication written by a Bengal Officer, which appear, duly acknowledged, in the second part of Mr. Fuller's Apology, under the title of *Audi et Alteram Parlem.* At the close

* Addressed to the Chairman of the East India Company, by the Rev. Rob. Hall.

of his strictures, after having sufficiently exposed the immorality and shocking absurdity of the Hindoo mythology, which the officer had so shamelessly attempted to "vindicate," Dr. Clarke mentions the missionaries in the most honourable terms.

"It may be supposed, (says he,) from the preceding Remarks, that we are parties in the Baptist mission in the East Indies, and that therefore our testimony may be justly liable to the charge of undue partiality. To remove every impression of this kind, we here declare that we never had, nor have we now, any religious connection whatever with the missionaries abroad, nor with their directors at home. We have, with many others, admired their zealous labours, their inoffensive, irreproachable, and exemplary conduct, and have been astonished at their various attainments; and particularly so at the deep, extensive, solid and unostentatious piety and learning of the Rev. Dr. CAREY, who is at their head; a gentleman, whom we scruple not to say, is an honour to religion, literature, and his country; a blessing to our Eastern possessions, and a credit to human nature.

Here ended the contest with the British Triad, except indeed, that Major Scott Waring, incapable of conviction or impression, went on raving, in company with the Socinian Barrister. Having done with Mr. Fuller, and the Baptist mission in India, his next attack was on two clergymen, who had preached before the Universities in favour of a translation of the Scriptures into the oriental languages; and also on lord Teignmouth, for having urged the policy and obligation of Britons to communicate to the natives of India the knowledge of Christ. The Major still continued his old trade, repeating and repeating, throughout a hundred and twenty more pages, the phrases and sentences of "mania of conversion—ignorant sectarian bigots—mad Baptists —mad Calvinistic missionaries—I am decidedly of opinion that the conversion of the Hindoos is impracticable—these proceedings will end in the destruction of our eastern empire," and a few more such sayings, till by his total invincibility he reduced his opponents to despair, and no farther operations were undertaken against him. Some of the critics indeed compared him to a Hindoo *yogi*, who had fixed himself on the top of a post, under a vow to repeat some one word or phrase millions of times; and themselves to persons sent repeatedly to reconnoitre him, and report what he is at, and who must every time return with the same story.

In reply to Dr. Barrow, who pleaded for an exclusive ecclesiastical establishment in India, and that missionary undertakings should be confined to the national church,

Mr. Fuller states the illiberality and total inadequacy of such a plan; but declined giving, on that occasion, any opinion on the propriety of such an establishment, independently of its becoming *exclusive*. The extravagant proposition of Dr. Barrow, whose avowed intolerance knows no limits but the want of power, was happily never entertained by the rulers either in church or state; but some time afterwards, when a renewal of the East India Company's Charter was contemplated, several eminent individuals, in the Directory and in the Senate, who had witnessed and deplored the various obstacles thrown in the way of the Baptist missionaries, were desirous of giving a legal currency to Christianity in India, by obtaining the adoption of an Episcopal establishment.

On this subject, the Secretary of the Baptist Mission would certainly not have obtruded his opinion, any more than on the former occasion; but the confidence these gentlemen had in his judgment, and the satisfaction they felt in reference to the able and prudent manner in which the concerns of the mission had been conducted, induced them to solicit his thoughts on their leading object, as well as on others connected with it.

A gentleman in the Directory, a member of parliament, having compiled a quarto volume on the affairs of India, sent it to Mr. Fuller for his revision. The work was printed, but not published, and consisted of—"A brief History of the British dominions in Hindostan—Evidences of the extreme immorality of the Hindoos—An inquiry into its causes—and the best means of providing an adequate remedy." Among the latter, an Episcopal establishment, under the direction of the East India Company, formed the principal feature.

In compliance with the request of the distinguished author of this performance, Mr. Fuller communicated some free remarks upon the subject, the principal part of which will now be quoted from his private correspondence, in order to show what was his opinion on the general affairs of India, and the faithful manner in which he acquitted himself on this delicate occasion.

"I feel a pleasure," says he, "in being able to acquit the Company, and their servants, of some things concerning which I had thought unfavourably. I am especially gratified in seeing more fully established, an idea which I had already entertained; viz. that from the time of Marquis Cornwallis's presidency, the government of that country

has sustained a very important change for the better, the impartial administration of justice being its grand object. Nevertheless, it appears to me, even from your own account, that there is still a world of iniquity attached to the affairs of India.

"Passing all this, I would remark a few things on your proposal to introduce Christianity, by means of the East India Company; and that the Christianity so introduced, should be an established Episcopacy. Your scheme will constantly be in danger of being thwarted, notwithstanding the control of the government and parliament at home; for what else can be expected from men of mere worldly wisdom? We do not gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles. Or if your plan be not entirely defeated, that which would be propagated would not be Christianity.

"But were it otherwise, still the Directors would not be the most proper persons to introduce the gospel into India, unless they would consent to restore all that they have unjustly taken away from the natives, or at least adopt an equal and benevolent system for the future. If in addition to a well regulated government, a principle of reciprocal advantage could be adopted as the ground of Indian commerce; if instead of draining and impoverishing their country, we could seek their good in connection with our own; in a word, if the system of justice and benevolence in temporal things, for which you plead, could be realized, there would then be some hope of doing them good in other matters. But without this, it is impossible to convince them of your *sincerity*. We must treat them as fellow men, before we can hope to be instrumental in making them fellow Christians. If Christ himself did good to men's bodies, as a means of gaining access to their minds, it is presumption in us to expect to accomplish this great object by other, and especially by opposite means.

"Suppose an intelligent Hindoo should meet with one of the Missionaries appointed or patronized by the Company; suppose him to be well acquainted with the history of his country for the last thirty or forty years; that he has read your performance, and being now addressed on the subject of Christianity, should reply to the following effect—

"'You tell us that we are bad, and you tell us the truth. You offer us a religion which you say, if embraced, will be productive of a purer morality. Has it produced this effect

upon *your people?* It is true, as your writers assert, "An Englishman cannot descend to those *little* practices of oppression or extortion, so familiar to the natives of Hindostan; his mind revolts at the idea of them." But you make no scruple of practising oppression and extortion on a *larger scale.* You have conquered our oppressive nabobs, and have taken their place. You have purchased the revenues of the country; and soon after you got them in possession, you withheld the stipulated price. You have power on your side, and you call it right. And have you then a right to render the existence of eighteen millions of men subservient to the enriching of a few thousands? Does the God you profess to adore, and the Saviour whom you recommend to us, approve of these things? If so, we are as well as we are.

"'You have given us some good regulations in government, and we are thankful for them: but all that you have done amounts to little more than "a correction of your own abuses." And even since that period of improvement, you have carried on offensive wars, to the great injury of our country; "not for our sakes, but for your own." The very nature of your government tends to impoverish us, and we feel it to our cost. It is true, for the advantages of a regular and good government, we could contentedly part with something: and if in your commerce you acted on the principle of reciprocal advantage, and sought our good along with your own, all would be well enough. But this is not the case: your people not only "fill all the offices of government, but all the first lines in commerce." In this way you have drained our unhappy country already of more than fifty millions sterling, and are every year continuing to drain us, without any adequate return. And now to make us amends for this complicated mass of injury, you offer us your religion.'

"Thus might an intelligent Hindoo retort upon the Company's agents, in their attempts to evangelize the country. Excuse me, therefore, if I say, unless your meliorating scheme of commerce could also be adopted, Christianity, through such a medium, must appear to the Hindoos like the bishop's blessing in the fable; of which they might be tempted to say with the jester, 'If it were worth a farthing, you would not have given it to us!'

"I admit and admire your arguments in favour of our being 'more and more secure in our possession of India, in proportion to the improved state of society among the in-

habitants:' but their fitness rests entirely upon the ground of the government being *just and good,* and the commercial system equalized. In other words, they depend for their validity upon its being the *interest* of Bengal as well as Britain to continue united. If a contrary system be pursued, the introduction, though not perhaps of Christianity, yet of the means by which it is communicated, namely, our language, and other intellectual improvements, would endanger our sovereignty. And as far as I can judge of right and wrong, it is right it should. It would be the height of wickedness for us to wish to compel and continue a union on opposite principles.

"As to an *established religion* in Bengal, I presume you do not expect my concurrence. If pious Episcopalians wished to go over, to spread the gospel which they believe, and stand on no other ground than the goodness of their cause, in the main of their undertaking, I should cheerfully wish them God speed; and would, if they needed it, according to my ability, contribute to their assistance, as several of them have done to ours: but an *established* religion is somewhat different. I have as great an objection to my own principles being an established religion as any other; yea, greater; for if some one religious system must be pressed into the service of the state, I had rather it were one I did not so well approve, that what I do approve might remain at liberty to serve the Lord without the imposition of human authority.

"I have no other objection to an establishment in Bengal than I have in England, or any other country. I believe all human establishments of religion to be injurious, as tending to set aside the authority of Christ in his church, and to introduce in its place unscriptural traditions, worldly pomp, and unmeaning ceremonies; all which being 'of human invention, cannot,' as you justly reason in another case, 'be approved of God.'

"It amounts to a moral certainty, that so long as the world continues to lie in wickedness, a great majority of every government will consist of irreligious characters. But a religion established and supported by such characters, must be supposed to partake of their spirit, and to be framed in subserviency to their ends. Whenever it ceases to comply with the will of the power that gave it an establishment, it must cease to be; or, which would be worse, itself will become a power, tyrannizing over its masters.

"In this direction proceeded the great apostacy of Rome. Until Christianity was adopted by the state, it was comparatively pure. The church, though oppressed by great afflictions and reproaches, grew and multiplied, and was then 'the bride of Christ;' but from that time she began to sustain a very different character. You know the representations given of her in the records of truth—that of 'a woman arrayed in scarlet—decked with gold, and pearls, and precious stones—and sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast.' In her first stages she was the servant, and in her last, the master of the beast on which she rode. Good men in power, like Constantine, may have thought that by raising the Christian clergy to worldly honours, and by creating offices in the church to which princely emoluments should be attached, they did God service: but they were mistaken.

"Perhaps you, Sir, may not propose to yourself any thing more than a number of serious and pious clergymen being properly provided for, and encouraged in their work; but should your plan succeed, its issue will be in a greater or less degree as above described. 'All establishments,' as you yourself acknowledge, 'carry in them a principle of progressive degeneracy.' Religion in any form is in danger of degenerating; but in this form it is morally impossible that it should be otherwise. In short, I object to an established religion, because it must necessarily be a creature of the state; and like every other creature, must be formed after the pleasure, and live upon the smiles of its creator.

"I approve of a religion that shall be peaceable, but chaste; favourable to order and good government, but not dependent on it; a faithful friend to those in power, and to those out of power, but not the retained advocate of either.

"Notwithstanding the freedom of these remarks, there is still much in your plan which I approve. It appears to me to be quite in character for the East India Company to provide means for teaching the Bengalese the English language, arts and sciences, and to send out schoolmasters for that purpose. This, if accomplished, would be a very important object. It would give them access to our Bible, as well as to many other things. Here also would be room for you and others to use your influence in procuring pious men, who might be great blessings in that capacity. And as to missionaries, I could be glad if you, as well as

we, could obtain the leave of the Company to send them, and that they might enjoy their *protection* when there. More than this I dare not ask, or even accept at their hands.

"I know your object is to do something on an *enlarged scale*. I revere your motives, but would entreat you to consider the words of an apostle, 2 Cor. vi. 11—18. Christian enlargement, according to this passage, and according to fact, does not consist in uniting with, or drawing into our religious measures, great numbers of worldly men; but rather in the reverse. The forming of such connections, is the same thing as being 'unequally yoked.' To unite the sprightly horse with a tardy ass would be to straiten rather than to enlarge him; and must impede the object, instead of promoting it. Half a score Christians, cordially united, will accomplish more than thousands of heterogeneous characters, possessed of mere discordant principles.

"But if your scheme were not thwarted by such a connection, it would certainly be corrupted, and so in great measure be defeated. Every body of men, like every species, if they propagate any thing, it will be their own likeness. True religion may be accidentally propagated by those who are destitute of it; but that is all. God often makes use of instruments in this way; but it is a work above our hands. If we attempt it, there is infinite danger of the work being marred. They may indeed be used in furnishing some of the materials, as Tyrian workmen furnished materials, and aided in the building of the temple: but they must not be invested with the power of direction. In this case the answer of Zerubbabel to those who offered to unite in rebuilding the temple, is worthy of example. 'You have nothing to do with us, to build a house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us.'

"You suppose the number of pious ministers that could be collected, and supported by voluntary subscription merely, would be small. Be it so: a small number, if they could co-operate with several pious schoolmasters, might do great things. I may also add, the number of characters suitable for such an undertaking, is small. You hope for thirty; I wish you may find so many. It is more than we can find amongst us. If you can muster ten, without hold-

ing up very handsome pecuniary prospects to allure them, it will be a good specimen of the prevalence of true religion in your connections.

"Finally: Notwithstanding all I have said, I had much rather see the doctrine of Christianity introduced among the Hindoos, even though it were under the form of an Established Episcopacy, than that they should continue as they are; and if you should persevere in your scheme, I shall pray that it may prosper in all that is good about it, and which I am persuaded is not a little."

CHAPTER XI.

Controversy with Mr. Booth—Letter to Dr. Hopkins—Remarks on some American Writers—Mr. Booth's notion of Regeneration by the Word examined—Particular Redemption—Conversation with a friend at Edinburgh, on the same subject—Atonement and Substitution of Christ—Letter to Dr. Erskine on the Merits of Christ—Letter to Mr. Maclean on Faith and Justification—Validity of Lay Ordination—Propriety of administering the Lord's Supper without a Minister—and Strict Communion.

It was grief of heart to Mr. Fuller, to have any disagreement with a man whom he so highly esteemed, as the venerable Abraham Booth. But on some minor points there was a difference between them, though not such as would justify the slightest alienation, or require any painful exercise of mutual forbearance. During the controversy on Faith, in which Mr. Fuller was several years engaged with various opponents, who marched forward from the ranks both of Arminians and Calvinists, to meet this redoubtable champion, Mr. Booth watched its progress with considerable anxiety; and finally concluded that he could find a middle path between those Calvinists who admit and those who deny the obligation of sinners to believe the gospel. He at the same time suspected that Mr. Fuller and his friends were too much attached to the sentiments of President Edwards, and other American divines of later date; and that by importing their metaphysical refinements, there would be some danger of relaxing that muscular system of theology to which he himself was so ardently devoted.

Mr. Booth, therefore, published, in 1796, his first edition of "Glad Tidings to perishing Sinners;" the object of

which is to prove that "the genuine gospel contains a complete warrant for the ungodly to believe in Jesus." This is a proposition which Mr. Fuller never denied, and which needed but little proof; and it is rather extraordinary that so acute a writer as Mr. Booth should seem to confound the "warrant" to believe, with a *disposition* to believe, or that state of mind which induces faith. Had the question been, what is it that *warrants* a sinner to believe in Christ; the obvious answer is, the gospel and that only. But if it were asked, what is it that *inclines* a sinner to believe; the only answer is, that sacred influence by which he is renewed in the spirit of his mind. Yet both in the title and tenor of the work, this necessary and important distinction is too much overlooked.

In the progress of his inquiry, Mr. Booth did not fail to animadvert pretty severely on some of the American writers whom he mentioned rather in terms of contempt; and the sentiments of Dr. Hopkins in particular, on the subject of regeneration and justification, he considered as "pernicious," and tending to "corrupt the gospel." His pamphlet soon crossed the Atlantic, where it was attentively examined by Dr. Hopkins, who transmitted to a friend on this side the water, a complete refutation of several of Mr. Booth's positions, accompanied with some pointed strictures on the temper of his performance, and the inconclusive nature of his reasonings. The respect entertained for Mr. Booth, did not permit the printing of this valuable manuscript, and it obtained only a private circulation; for, whatever difference of opinion might exist on some speculative points, all parties were agreed in paying homage to his character. Mr. Fuller apologized to Dr. Hopkins, for Mr. Booth's manner of writing, and his seeming contempt for cotemporary authors, in a letter dated March 17, 1798; while he at the same time expressed his own opinion of the manuscript in question.

"I sincerely thank you," says he, "for your remarks on Mr. Booth's performance; which every person of judgment who has seen them, within my knowledge, considers as a decisive refutation. When his piece first came out, I was in London. I looked into it, and soon after called upon him. I told him, as to his first part, I had no objection to it, except this; that it seemed to imply that sinners were very willing to come to Christ, if the door was but open; and all that appeared to be wanting was a right or 'warrant' to come. But as to his second part, I was fully persuaded

that he was wrong, and that I could prove him so. To which he made scarcely any other reply than saying he supposed I should not approve of it.

I have remarked the effects of his pamphlet on the public mind. Some of our monthly editors have bestowed indiscriminate praise, without at all understanding the ground of the controversy. People in general do not seem to comprehend his design. They can see no object he has in view, or who, or what he means to oppose, except one. They think his first part savours of an agreement with me; and reckon, therefore, that the whole book was written in order to favour my sentiments on the duty of sinners to believe in Christ. I have been asked for a copy of my first piece on that subject; and when I have answered, it is out of print: 'Well,' it has been said, 'I will get Mr. Booth's book; I reckon they are pretty much alike.' In short, I do not think it will do any harm, owing chiefly to its obscurity.

You are mistaken, however, in Mr. Booth's character; and as for his manner of writing, it may admit of some apology. He is an upright, godly, learned man. But—(1.) He is a generation older than Sutcliffe, Pearce, or myself; and perhaps it may be owing to this that he is less attentive to any thing we write.—(2.) He is a great admirer of Owen, Vitringa, Venema, &c. and seems to suppose that they have gone to the *ne plus ultra* of discovery. (3.) Having written a pretty large and valuable work, entitled, "Pedobaptism Examined on the Principles, Concessions, and Reasonings of the most learned Pedobaptists," he there got into such a habit of *quotation*, that he seems unable to write half a dozen pages without it. And though I believe him to be as honest a man as any in the world, I will not say that he is destitute of what on both sides of the water, for aught I know, may be called 'British pride.'* I attribute his misrepresentations of your sentiments to this spirit, by which he was prevented from a patient and candid examination of the whole of what you say, rather than to any unworthy design; for of this he is utterly incapable."

Mr. Fuller and his connections certainly had a very high esteem for the writings of President Edwards, and others of the New-England school, which they read with consid-

* This alludes to Mr. Booth's frequently calling his opponent the "*American* Doctor."

siderable advantage; and to that bulwark of the Calvinistic system, Edwards's treatise on the Freedom of the Will, Mr. Fuller acknowledged himself indebted for his first right views on the subject of moral obligation. But that he indiscriminately adopted the sentiments of these writers, or admitted all their reasonings, is far from being true. In the same letter to Dr. Hopkins, from which the above extracts are taken, are the following paragraphs:

"I am not sure that your idea of God being 'the author of sin,' is essentially different from the notion of those Calvinists who consider sin as the object of divine decree: but I am satisfied of this, that to say 'God is the author of sin,' does so naturally convey to almost every mind the ideas that God is the friend and approver of sin; that we are mere passive instruments, and that he himself being the grand agent, ought only to be accountable for it,—that I should think, by using it, I conveyed ideas directly contrary to James i. 13. And I must say, that the whole of that passage, taken together, appears to me to represent an important truth, which your manner of writing seems to overlook; and which is thus expressed by *M'Laurin*, in his sermon on the passage,—'Whatever dishonourable thoughts sinful men may have of God to the contrary, yet it is a truth clearly evident, that God is infinitely free from the blame of their sins.'* Your observations on the passage, in vol. i. p. 213, of your system, go only to prove that your views do not represent God as tempting men to sin, or as being tempted himself to sin: but you do not observe the *opposition* in the context, that evil is *not* to be ascribed to God, ver. 13—15; that every good and perfect gift, especially regeneration, *is* to be ascribed to God, ver. 16—18.

I have enjoyed great pleasure in reading many of your metaphysical pieces, and hope those who can throw light on evangelical subjects in that way, will continue to write. But I have observed that wherever an extraordinary man has been raised up, like President Edwards, who has excelled in some particular doctrines, or manner of reasoning, it is usual for his followers and admirers too much to confine their attention to his doctrines or manner of reasoning, as though all excellence was there concentrated. I allow that your present writers do not implicitly follow Edwards, as to his sentiments, but that you preserve a spirit of free

* Sermons and Essays, p. 31.

inquiry: yet I must say, it appears to me that several of your younger men possess a rage of imitating his metaphysical manner, till some of them become metaphysic mad. I am not without some of Mr. Scott's apprehensions, lest by such a spirit, the simplicity of the gospel should be lost, and truth amongst you stand more in the wisdom of men, than in the power of God."

There were also some half taught geniuses at home, who were smattering away on the subject of human obligation, to the neglect of the great doctrines of the gospel; and of this, Mr. Fuller was sufficiently aware. In a letter which he addressed to the President of the Bristol Academy, he thus expressed himself. "I earnestly wish the students may steer clear of the ditch and the quagmire. It is of vast importance for a minister to be decidedly on the side of God, against himself as a sinner, and against an apostate world. Nor is it less important that he have an ardent love to Christ, and the gospel of salvation by free grace. I wish they may so believe, and feel, and preach the truth, as to find their message an important reality, influencing their own souls, and those of others. Let them beware of so preaching doctrine as to forget to declare *all* the counsel of God, all the precepts of the word. Let them equally beware of so dwelling upon the perceptive part of Scripture, as to forget the grand principles on which alone it can be carried into effect." In reference also to this subject, he afterwards delivered a sermon at the Oakham Association, on the importance of making the common salvation the leading theme of the ministry, and the first object of christian attachment. "It has frequently been the case, (said he,) that some one particular topic has formed the character of an age or generation of men; and this topic has been hacknied in almost every place, till the public mind has become weary of it; while other things of equal importance have been overlooked. Both preachers and hearers are in danger of making light of common truths, and of indulging in a spirit of curious speculation. This will render preaching rather an entertainment, than a benefit to the soul. We are commanded to *feed* the church of God; not their fancies, or imaginations, nor merely their understandings, but their renewed minds. It indicates a vicious taste, and affords a manifest proof of degeneracy, where the common salvation is slighted, and matters of refinement eagerly pursued. The doctrine of Christ crucified is full of the wisdom of God, and will furnish materials for the strongest powers: let this, therefore, be our darling

theme." This advice was exemplified in a high degree by the person who gave it; scarcely any one in Mr. Fuller's connections dwelt so frequently and with so much delight, on the great principles of the gospel as he did himself: and it was matter of grief to him that they were not more regarded in the general strain of preaching.

On other occasions also Mr. Fuller dissented from the opinions of the American writers, and as freely stated his own convictions. The Sermon he preached at the Bedford Union having found its way to America, Dr. Hopkins offered some strictures upon it, which elicited the following remarks from the author. "Dr. Hopkins thinks, (says he,) that I have given up the doctrine of disinterested love, because I have observed concerning David, when he said 'Here I am, let him do with me as seemeth good in his sight,' that he *could* not mean by this, If God have no love to my soul, I submit to be for ever separated from him: for such submission is not required of any who lives under a dispensation of mercy.—I have written an answer to Dr. Hopkins, in which I have defended that position. He is a mighty reasoner: but on this subject I feel my ground. Should he furnish a reply, the correspondence may hereafter be published."

Much as he approved of the able Discoures of Dr. Jonathan Edwards, on the consistency of the atonement with the doctrine of free grace, "I object, (says he,) to Edwards's account of *public justice*, as being too indefinite. It comprises, he says 'all moral goodness, and properly means the righteousness or rectitude of God, by which all his actions are guided, with a supreme regard to the greatest good.' But if public justice comprises 'all moral goodness,' it comprises the exercise of goodness or good will to his creatures. But to say that Christ died to satisfy goodness, would be strange. Public justice is that expression of the divine character which has a special regard to what is *right:* its province is to guard the rights of moral government, and take care that the divine authority be not impaired."

Had it not been for the insinuations alluded to at the beginning of this Chapter, and for the wish which some others discovered, to identify Mr. Fuller with the American writers for the purpose of reproach, and to represent him as being the importer of a foreign system of theology, it could not have been necessary to adduce these extracts from his private correspondence, to show that he could not justly be so identified, or that he was capable of thinking

for himself; nor indeed is it even now necessary; for setting aside all party prejudices, no one acquainted with Mr. Fuller's writings can doubt that they display an independent and original cast of mind, rarely to be met with in modern authors. The reader, therefore, will excuse this digression, and we will turn again to Mr. Booth.

Having published his Glad Tidings, under the full conviction that Mr. Fuller's sentiments were defective and erroneous, he rested satisfied in having taken up an invulnerable position in the doctrine of regeneration by the word of God; and herein, as he supposed, lay the main strength of his performance. In conversation with a friend upon the subject, January, 1798, Mr. Booth observed, that he had consulted nearly twenty bodies of divinity, all of which confirmed his statement of the connection between faith and regeneration; and that if any one could fairly answer his reasoning in page 155 of the first edition of his Glad Tidings, he would give up the whole of his performance; for on that reasoning, the strength of his position depended.

This implied challenge being reported to Mr. Fuller, he very attentively re-examined the passage, and communicated his thoughts to the Editor of these Memoirs, who afterwards submitted them to Mr. Booth's inspection, but without receiving any answer. The reader will find some interest in pursuing this little piece of controversy between these two eminent men, which has not before transpired, though the substance of it may have been wrought into some of Mr. Fuller's later publications.

The invincible position, on which Mr. Booth so confidently relied, is as follows:—

"If satan laid the foundation of his kingdom amongst men, by the use of language replete with infernal falsehood; it cannot be absurd to maintain, that the spiritual dominion of Christ in the hearts of sinners commences under the salutary operation of divine truth. If the father of lies, by words of deceit, without any previous physical influence on the mental powers, polluted the imagination, obscured the understanding, and corrupted the heart of Eve, when in her primitive state, and under a strong bias to obedience; why should it be denied that the Holy Spirit, by the word of truth, without any preparatory agency on the soul, enlightens the mind, impresses the conscience, and gives a new turn to the heart of one that is dead in sin?

As the first inclination to evil, in the human heart, when perfectly pure, was produced without any previous phy-

sical influence by the lie of Satan; we are led by analogy, equally as by the language of scripture, to consider the first holy tendency, in a heart that is totally corrupt, as produced by the truth of God, without any preparatory agency."

Mr. Fuller replies to this notion of Regeneration by the Word, in the following manner.

Mr. Booth's argument is entirely drawn from two supposed opposites. Arguing from opposites is very safe, provided there be an opposition in that point wherein the argument consists. Let us examine whether this be the case in the present instance.

The cases are,—the origin of *evil* in a creature free from sin, and the origin of *good* in a creature free from righteousness.

According to Mr. Booth, the origin of evil is found in a discredit of the word: Ergo, the origin of good will be found in a credit of the word.

Again: There was no evil bias antecedently to Eve's discrediting the word: Ergo, there is no holy bias given to the heart antecedently to believing the word.

Thus far Mr. Booth: let us now proceed a step farther.

Eve was wrought upon, for aught appears, merely by moral suasion, without any supernatural influence: she was influenced by words, or motives, as creatures influence one another. Ergo, we are wrought upon in regeneration merely in the same way, by moral suasion only; by words, or motives, and without any supernatural influence whatever.

This is worse than Arminianism itself, which admits at least of some kind of divine influence. Here Mr. Booth would dissent: but why should he? It is an argument arising from his own principles.

He would however admit a difference between the two cases. Eve's mind, he would say, though free from sin, was not invulnerable to evil: but the heart of a sinner, who is far from righteousness, is invulnerable to every thing but the arm of Jehovah. Isaiah liii. 1. And by admitting this, he would destroy his argument from opposites; seeing the opposition does not hold in that part wherein the argument consists.

But is it not true, that the human mind is in all cases drawn into exercise by motives? I believe it is. The

question then will turn upon this hinge: In what manner does the Holy Spirit influence the mind, so as to give efficacy to those powerful motives which are addressed to it in the gospel? Is it by giving an additional energy to the motives, which they do not in themselves possess; or is it by giving to the soul a susceptibility of truth?—The answer to this question must be decided by the scriptures.

Now the scriptures represent blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, as the reason why men cannot believe. John xii. 39, 40. But if these things be the only bar to believing, is it unreasonable to suppose, that divine influence should be exerted in the removal of them? Does not the manner of speaking which the scriptures use, convey to us this idea;—That in turning a sinner to himself, God not only presents the light before him, but gives him eyes to see; that he not only proclaims to him the joyful sound, but gives him ears to hear it? Or, to speak without a figure, that he not only presents the truth, but gives him a heart to understand it, in order that he may convert and be healed?

Nothing can operate as a motive, unless the mind be susceptible of it: the most powerful motives furnished by the gospel are therefore no motives to an unrenewed mind. But if the Lord open the heart, we attend to the things that are spoken. He has also promised to put his law into the inward parts, and to write it in the hearts of sinners. Jer. xxxi. 33. But seeing their hearts are represented as stone, on which nothing makes impression, how could this be affected? By taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh. Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

Mr. Booth accuses this sentiment of "enthusiasm:" but why so? Perhaps he can form no idea of any divine influence, except that which is by means of the word. And can he form an idea of any influence by the word? We can conceive of the influence of motives upon the mind, that is, of the word itself; but not of any additional energy being given to those motives, which they did not in themselves possess.

But are we not said to be begotten 'by the word of truth?' We are: but the terms begotten, regenerated, quickened, born again, do not appear to be used by the sacred writers in a metaphysical sense; that is, they are not designed to convey the idea merely of that 'heart to understand,' which is given in order to conversion; (Deut. xxix. 4. John xii. 40.) but the *whole* of that change by which a sin-

ner becomes a saint. I do not think that in scripture, regeneration denotes one stage of that change, and conversion another; but that they are figurative representations of the same thing, which is sometimes called regeneration, sometimes conversion, sometimes a resurrection, and sometimes a creation. In this sense, therefore, I believe regeneration to be by the word of God; and which I think is consistent with a divine influence, giving a heart to understand, that we may be converted and be healed; or that this influence is exerted previously to a voluntary and cordial reception of the truth.

I know not how Mr. Booth will make it appear, that faith and regeneration are coeval in the order of nature. In whatever sense he considers faith, his argument from *opposites*, and maintaining that regeneration is by the word, renders this coexistence inconsistent. If he considers faith as the belief of the word, which his argument from opposites requires, and yet ascribes regeneration to it, then faith must *precede* regeneration, as the cause necessarily precedes the effect.

But if he considers faith as "a reliance on Christ for salvation," and the belief of the word as a matter "presupposed," as he has stated it in page 3; then regeneration must *precede* faith. Eve he considers as being depraved by the belief of a lie, and a sinner as being regenrated by the belief of the truth: but if so, regeneration is effected by that which is even *previous* to faith, or which is "presupposed by it:" it must therefore itself be previous to faith, or to "a reliance on Christ for salvation."

Not deeming the above remarks worthy of attention, Mr. Booth published a new and enlarged edition of his pamphlet, in 1800. The Rev. Thomas Scott, author of a valuable commentary on the Bible, having laid before the public his thoughts on "the nature and warrant of faith," in reference to Mr. Booth's performance, Mr. Fuller was solicited to give a review of both these pamphlets in one of the monthly journals; and when he had done so, it gave considerable offence to Mr. Booth. He also noticed some of his arguments in a new edition of his treatise on Faith, which made its appearance soon after, and which was by no means palatable to the author of Glad Tidings; who by this time began to complain that his antagonist "was always in pursuit of him."

A few friendly explanations, however, were sufficient to adjust the present misunderstanding between the parties,

who continued to maintain their respective differences of sentiment, without any hinderance to a cordial intercourse. But unfortunately, another subject for controversy started up, which placed them again in a state of opposition. Some of the monthly editors, as well as others, endeavoured to represent Mr. Fuller as having abandoned his principles on the subject of Particular Redemption; placing its peculiarity not in the degree of Christ's sufferings, or in any want of sufficiency as to the nature of the atonement, but merely in the sovereignty of God respecting its application. This was reckoned an error of such magnitude, as ought to sink him in the esteem of religious people; and had the words of Calvin himself been quoted on this subject, they would have been sufficient in the account of some modern Calvinists, to prove even him an Arminian.

Instead of abandoning his former views, Mr. Fuller avowed the same principle at the commencement of the present controversy, as he afterwards maintained in his later publications. In his Reply to Mr. Dan Taylor, pp. 63, 64, his words are:

"I suppose Philanthropos is not ignorant that Calvinists in general have considered the particularity of redemption as consisting not in the *degree* of Christ's sufferings, as though he must have suffered more, if more sinners had been finally saved, or in any *insufficiency* that attended them; but in the sovereign *purpose and design* of the Father and the Son, whereby they were constituted, or appointed, the price of their redemption; the objects of that redemption ascertained, and the ends to be answered by the whole transaction determined. They suppose the sufferings of Christ, in *themselves* considered, are of infinite value; sufficient to have saved all the world, and a thousand worlds, if it had pleased God to have constituted them the price of their redemption, and made them effectual to that end. These views of the subject accord with my own."

It is true, Mr. Fuller at the same time represents Christ as dying in the character of a shepherd for his flock, as a husband for his church, and a surety for his people; but each of these particulars is adduced merely in proof of *a speciality of design* in the death of Christ, and not of the want of any sufficiency in the nature of the atonement itself. Every charge, therefore, of his having relinquished his sentiments, founded on these arguments, must be nuga-

tory. It is manifest he then thought, as he did afterwards, that the obedience and death of Christ, in themselves considered, were like the sun in the heavens, necessary for an individual, but sufficient for a world; sufficient for all, but effectual only to the elect, and *that* in consequence of the sovereign design of the Father and the Son respecting the atonement.

On the appearance, however, of the second edition of Mr. Fuller's treatise on Faith, in which these sentiments were reviewed, and subsequently to a clamour raised by the dread of an imaginary innovation, Mr. Booth classed himself amongst the body of alarmists; and in September, 1803, preached a sermon at the monthly meeting, which was afterwards published, under the title of "Divine Justice essential to the Divine Character." Desirous of preventing any future misunderstanding, and of continuing in friendship with a man whom Mr. Fuller so highly esteemed, he addressed the following letter to the author of the sermon, soon after its delivery, and previous to its publication:

October 19, 1803.

"Dear Sir,

"I am informed that in a sermon which you lately delivered at the monthly meeting, you were understood to have made 'a smart attack upon me;' that you were requested to print the sermon; and that you expressed a design to publish something more substantial on the subject than a single sermon, or to that effect. From the account I have received of your sermon, I should conceive there is nothing in it but what I believe and approve, except the misstatement given of my sentiments.

"In the letter which I wrote to you last May, previous to my calling upon you as you desired, I assured you that a cordial reconciliation would give me great pleasure, and I expressly requested that it might be *cordial*, or not at all. Such it was on my part, and such I understood it to be on yours. It is true, that in your letter of April 1, 1803, while you expressed your sorrow for having misunderstood, and so misrepresented me, you intimated that you were "exceedingly averse from the necessary consequences of certain tenets, which, if you rightly understood me, I had avowed." But in the same letter you proposed, if providence should permit, to 'lay your sentiments on these subjects before me.' To this I replied in my letter of May

8th, that 'as to any thing you might find leisure and inclination to communicate, I should be happy to read and consider it.'

"Now, Sir, after all this, and without any thing new occurring, that I know of, I should not have expected to hear of your publicly attacking me, as having advanced what was 'near to nonsense,' and proposing to write largely on the subject. I should have thought, if truth had been your only object, you would have tried whether I might not be convinced of my supposed error by the means which you first proposed; namely, that of "laying before me your sentiments.' If, however, you determine otherwise, so be it.

"In order to prevent as far as possible any unnecessary disputation that might arise from misapprehension, I will add a few things respecting the sentiment which I presume you mean to oppose. Of this, I think, you cannot complain, as it will save you some unpleasant reflections. If my information be correct, you define redemption to be 'deliverance by price.' To this I have no objection. I also freely allow, that 'the application of redemption is not redemption:' it is the carrying of the work of redemption into effect, and is accomplished by the agency of the Holy Spirit. Nor does the peculiarity of redemption consist in such application. To say it did, would indeed be denying the doctrine; and not only approaching 'near to nonsense,' but plunging into it. But whether I have always happily expressed myself or not, it never was my design to convey any such idea.

"It is true, that from what I have heard of your objections, I really thought I must have somewhere stated, 'that the peculiarity of redemption lay in the sovereignty of *its* application;' and I possibly may have admitted this statement in conversation, if not in writing. But if I have, I meant to use the word redemption not in a proper, but metonymical sense; not for deliverance, but that by which it was obtained; in which sense it is used, if I mistake not, in Romans iii. 24, as being that through which we are justified.

"On looking over what I have written, however, in the second edition of my treatise on Faith, p. 109, I find what I have stated to be this: 'The peculiarity which attends the atonement, consists not in its insufficiency to save more than are saved; but in the sovereignty of its application.' And what this sovereign application of the atonement is

I have explained in more places than one; namely, the *purpose* or *design* of the Father and the Son concerning it; whose intention it was that what was sufficient for all, should be appropriated or applied to a part, the atonement being offered and accepted as the price of their redemption. Whether every passage I have written on this subject be so clearly expressed as to be incapable of any other construction or not, I never meant to place the peculiarity of redemption in its application; but in the previous design of which it is the result. If you look into my reply to Philanthropos, you will find the same sentiment; and I never understood that you objected to it till after I had reviewed your Glad Tidings.

"To say that the peculiarity of redemption consists in the *design* of the Father and the Son, that the atonement should be effectual to the redemption of the elect, is very different from saying 'the peculiarity of redemption lies in *its* application;' and it is only by this misstatement that you have made 'nonsense' of it. The distinction which I always from the time of writing my reply to Philanthropos meant to hold out was, between *what the death of Christ was in itself adapted to, and sufficient for, and what it was designed by the Father and the Son actually to accomplish;* a distinction which, you must know, belongs not to the system of Arminius, but to that of his opponents.

"You may easily conceive, Sir, it cannot be agreeable to me to repel public attacks by private explanations. It is what I would not do to any man of the same age with myself. I have done so, however, to you, now a second time. I hope after this, if I am publicly opposed, whether from the pulpit or the press, my sentiments will not be misrepresented. If when fairly stated, they can be overturned, so let them be."

Mr. Booth, after a few months, published his Sermon on "Divine Justice; to which is subjoined an Appendix," containing a repetition of the identical misstatements pointed out in the above letter, and which were afterwards quoted with applause in other publications. Hapless indeed is the fate of such an author, who must be compelled to believe against his will, and to admit of sentiments which he utterly disavows!

Between Mr. Fuller and Mr. Booth, however, there was no contrariety of opinion as to "divine justice being essential to the divine character," nor as to the absolute necessity of the atonement to reconcile the exercise of mercy

with the rights of justice, and the grounds on which the believer is accounted righteous before God. On these points they were perfectly agreed. The difference chiefly relates to what precise ideas ought to be attached to the terms *substitution* and *imputation.* Mr. Booth conceived that Mr. Fuller had expressed himself in too general terms respecting the extent of the atonement, as opening a way whereby the whole race of man *might* be saved, as far as respects *sufficiency* in the atonement, though the number who shall ultimately receive the advantage of it, is limited by the divine sovereignty. He therefore contended that Christ *represented a certain number only*, whose sins and deserved punishment were transferred to him; and to whom, on the contrary, his obedience and sufferings are imputed, as forming their justifying righteousness.

On the subject of imputation, Mr. Fuller repeatedly insisted that there could be no medium between Christ's being really considered as a *sinner*, in his substitutional capacity, and his being treated for our sakes *as though he were one;* and that as Mr. Booth rejected the latter as too vague and indefinite, he must of necessity embrace the former alternative. Mr. Booth, however, with just abhorrence abjures the idea of charging the Redeemer with guilt in any other sense than by imputation; yet he speaks of him as being every thing but a sinner, and uses some expressions too nearly akin to those which make him really such. He also insinuates as if Mr. Fuller had denied the imputation of Christ's righeousness, while he maintained the imputation of its effects, and represents this as an absurdity. Whereas Mr. Fuller had said, that the imputation of Christ's righteousness to a believer, is the treating him as righteous through Christ, by justifying and glorifying him, *as if he were really righteous;* and so far as relates to *treatment*, he is accounted righteous, but in his *real character*, God must ever view him as a sinner.

In the Appendix to this Sermon, where the points in dispute are more directly investigated, there is a total misapprehension of Mr. Fuller's meaning, and indeed a total misrepresentation of his words. In spite of all remonstrance, he again represents him as saying, that "the particularity of the *atonement* consists in the sovereign pleasure of God, with regard to its application;" leaving it implied, that Mr. Fuller had not included the existence of any predetermination, or that God had any special design to accomplish by the death of Christ.

This hopeless piece of business issued in a correspondence, not between Mr. Fuller and Mr. Booth, (for with the former the latter declined to communicate) but between Mr. Booth and Dr. Ryland, through whom he received Mr. Fuller's statements. The substance of this correspondence was afterwards given to the public, in a dialogue between "Peter, James, and John;"* in which the points in dispute are fairly stated. It is true indeed that this mode of writing is liable to strong objections, as it invariably gives to the dialogist the palm of victory; but that Mr. Booth's sentiments and reasonings are not misrepresented, there is the fullest assurance from the well known integrity of the writer, and the unimpeachable veracity of his friend, the late Dr. Ryland, who addressed to Mr. Booth a private remonstrance, from which the following are extracts:

"As to Mr. Fuller, if I should find any thing in which he has expressed himself inaccurately, I will tell *him* of it myself; but I will not have the remotest hand in furnishing the many professors, who dislike him for opposing their attempts to *annihilate duty*, with a term of reproach, that has with them far more weight than twenty scriptural arguments. That a man who is continually employed for God, and has ably defended the cause of God against the most mischievous foes of the truth, should be held up as an object of suspicion and dislike, while the most injudicious and inconsiderate distortions of Calvinism are suffered to pass unnoticed, is to me a matter of unspeakable surprise."

The only design of the writer in reviewing these recollections, is to do justice to the memory of his departed friend, and to prevent as far as possible, the repetition of those misstatements, relative to Mr. Fuller's sentiments, which have already been too often encouraged. No one acquainted with the character of Mr. Booth, can forbear to venerate his memory; but it is undeniable, that his tenacity for a system, and his dread of innovation, subjected him to impressions not the most favourable to free and candid inquiry. It was a matter of grief to Mr. Fuller, that he had to encounter opposition from a man whom he could never approach but with sentiments of reverential esteem,

* Vide Dialogues, Letters, and Essays. Chap. vii. Memoirs, pp. 189, 190.

and he often mentioned it with regret; especially as that opposition was demanded, and might have been effective, in another quarter. The collision between such eminent individuals, like two jarring worlds, passing in opposite directions with their blaze of light, cannot fail to be interesting, though only some of their remoter angles came in contact; and it will be wise and honourable in the friends of both, to imitate their virtues, and avoid their imperfections.

In what light the principal subjects of the present controversy were considered in other parts of the kingdom, will appear in the two following articles.

Conversation with a friend at Edinburgh, on the subject of Particular Redemption, in 1805.

S. Mr. Booth has published a Sermon, the appendix to which is understood to be directed against *you.*

F. I suppose so.

S. He intimates, does he not, that you place the peculiarity of redemption in its *application?*

F. I think he does not express himself just so; but that those whom he opposes, place it in the application of the *atonement.*

S. And do you place it in the *application,* call it which you will, of redemption or of the atonement?

F. No, I do not.

S. In what then?

F. In the sovereign pleasure of God, with *regard* to its application. In other words, *In the design of the Father and the Son,* respecting the PERSONS TO WHOM IT SHALL BE APPLIED.

S. Indeed? And is that all you have asserted on that subject?

F. So far as I remember, it is—it is all that I believe.

S. But there is a great difference between the peculiarity of redemption being placed in its *application,* and in the design of the Father and the Son, *respecting* its application.

F. True; as great as between election and vocation. The one is the work of the Holy Spirit in time; the other is the purpose of God before time.

S. And is it possible for Mr. Booth to have so far mistaken your meaning?

F. Yes, and more than this: He has actually quoted my words in proof of what they DISPROVE. My words, as stated by himself at the beginning of his appendix, are—"The *particularity* of the atonement consists in the *sovereign pleasure of God, with regard to its application.*" And this is alleged in proof, that I confound the atonement with its application! I consider particular redemption as merely a branch of election, or as the great design of election running through all the works of God. In giving his Son to die, he kept this design in view. In sending his gospel, he does the same. Not that the one was in itself insufficient to atone for more, or the other to make more wise unto salvation, than are so made; but all is applied according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will.

S. That is just the idea of the apostle, in Ephes. i. "He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings . . . . *according as he hath chosen us* in him, before the foundation of the world." But what do you mean, and what end is answered, by maintaining the *sufficiency* of the atonement to save more than God purposed to save?

F. I consider that if one sinner only had been saved consistently with justice, it required to be by the same all-perfect obedience unto death: and this being yielded, is *itself* equally adapted to save a world as an individual, provided a world believed in it. And as to the end answered by it, you allow, and Mr. Booth allows, that sinners without distinction are *invited* to believe in Christ.

S. True.

F. If there be a sufficiency in Christ's death, beyond what is actually accomplished by it, there is a ground in the nature of things for such invitations. But if not, a great part of mankind will be found at last to have been invited to believe and partake of that which had no existence. They are not only invited to do that which is *morally* impossible, in which there is no contradiction; but that which is *physically* impossible: for how could they believe in Christ for salvation, if the salvation of Christ was insufficient for them? Instead of saying, "Come, for all things are ready;" according to such a notion, we should say, "Come, though it may be, nothing is ready if you were to come." I know Mr. Booth talks of a *waste* of love; but he might as well talk of what was done for the unbelievers in the wilderness as a waste of love, or of

the gospel being sent to thousands who never receive it, as a waste of love.

Another Conversation, on the Atonement and Substitution of Christ.

Arriving at Dundee, I presently found myself amidst a circle of friends, ministers, and others, who requested me to give my ideas of the Atonement and Substitution of Christ. The substance of what passed, as nearly as I can recollect, was as follows:

I consider the atonement as a divine extraordinary expedient, for the exercise of mercy consistently with justice.

With respect to the Saviour being our Substitute, perhaps my ideas may appear by a few connected observations.

God, as the moral governor of the world, delights to impart his favour in reward of obedience; like a wise and good parent, who not only loves his children, but loves righteousness also, and therefore bestows his gifts in reward of it.—"Well."—If man had continued in obedience, God would have poured forth all the fulness of his heart, all the blessings of eternal life in reward of it.—"Well."—But man became a rebel, and God hath nothing left in our world to reward.

"True; and what then?"

God must either withhold his favours, and instead of them, inflict his displeasure; or bestow them in some other way.—"Well."—He has not withheld his favour, but has bestowed it in some other way.—"In what way?"—He has given his own Son, from mere self-moved goodness; and not as the reward of any thing done by any one.—"Well."—He has also blessed a certain number of the human race with all spiritual blessings, in reward of his obedience unto death. He being made a curse, all who believe in him are exempted from it; and yielding full obedience to the law, God rewarded him by justifying and saving them at his request, and for his sake. The death of Christ was a satisfaction to justice; not by the *letter* of the law having taken its course; but God having hereby expressed his displeasure against sin, the *spirit* of it is preserved and honoured, though the believing sinner is pardoned. God is so well pleased with the obedience and death of his Son, that he gives him all he asks; and he asks our salvation. There is no sin so great, but he can forgive it; nor blessing so

rich, but he can bestow it for his sake. Every petition presented in his name is sure to succeed.

"But is there nothing in the substitution of Christ which renders our salvation a matter of *right*?"

It is certainly consistent with right, and an exercise of remunerative justice *towards Christ*. But it is not so a matter of right, as not to be in every part of it an exercise of free grace *towards us;* nor does it to us become a matter of *claim*. The only right or title that we have to it is in virtue of *promise;* and God never promises that which he could not in justice withhold.

"I have heard some persons speak of christians as claiming salvation in virtue of Christ's death, and of *sueing* out their right to it."

So have I, and have been greatly surprised at their arrogance. Could *you* talk in that strain upon your knees?

"If our salvation be an exercise of remunerative justice towards Christ; why is it not the same towards us?"

The union between Christ and us, though sufficiently close to afford a foundation for what we did, to be reckoned *as if it were* his, and what he did and suffered, *as if it were* ours; yet is not so intimate as for the actions of either to *be* those of the other. We talk of *guilt* being taken away by the death of Christ; and if by guilt we mean *obnoxiousness* to punishment, it is so. But if we mean *desert* of punishment, it is not so. Guilt in this sense is untransferable, and must for ever attach to the offender. Sin and righteousness are imputable, but not transferable, *except in their effects*. The imputation of our sin to Christ consists in the transfer of its effects; and the imputation of his righteousness to us consists in the same. God did not *think* his Son a sinner, and us innocent; but he treated each *as if they were so*.

"But did not Christ ask for our being with him, in a way of claim?"

Not so as if it were not of grace: but God being so well pleased with his Son, desired him, if I may so speak, to ask what he would—and he asked our salvation.

"But is not God said to be *just*, as well as faithful, in forgiving our sins?"

Yes; and he is said to be righteous, or rather, *not unrighteous* to forget our labour of love. Yet you do not claim such rewards as an exercise of essential justice, or so as to supersede grace.

ON THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S MERIT:

In a Letter to the Rev. Dr. John Erskine.

In Mr. Fuller's work on Deism, entitled, "The Gospel its own Witness," he intimated in a Note, that he had "no doubt of the atonement of Christ being a perfect satisfaction to divine justice; nor of his being worthy of all that was conferred upon him, and upon us for his sake; nor of that which to *us* is sovereign mercy being to *him* an exercise of remunerative justice: but he wished it to be considered, whether the moral Governor of the world was laid under such a kind of obligation to show mercy to sinners as a creditor is under to discharge a debtor, on having received full satisfaction at the hands of a surety? If he be, the writer was unable to perceive how there could be any room for free forgiveness on the part of God; or how it can be said that justice and grace harmonize in a sinner's salvation."

Dr. John Erskine of Edinburgh, as well as some others, hesitated to admit this statement; and the following is Mr. Fuller's answer to his objections:

"*February* 25, 1800.

"Dear Sir,

"I thank you for your free and friendly remarks upon my late publication. Your approbation of what I write, I can truly say, gives me great satisfaction; and your disapprobation of a certain part of it, induced me carefully to re-examine it, lest I should be mistaken. If I could perceive that any thing I have written, detracts from the glory of my Redeemer's mediation, I should be very unhappy.

"You suggest an apprehension that the sentiment thrown out is inconsistent with our being directed to pray *in the name* of Christ, or on the ground of his *merits*, which you consider as our title to eternal life. Whether any thing I have written, really clashes with this sentiment or not, be assured that all my prayers and hopes are in the name of Christ; and his merit or worthiness is my only title to eternal life. Perhaps, however, I may affix to these terms, ideas different from yours, and therein may consist all the difference between us.

"I never liked to deal in scholastic terms, unless I could perceive they had a clear sense in them. I have therefore said nothing of the distinction between the merit of *con-*

dignity, and the merit of *congruity;* but so far as I understand these terms, they express what I mean. I apprehend that merit of the first kind is not only inapplicable to the virtuous exercises of creatures towards God, but such as cannot possibly be exercised towards an all-perfect Being by any one, whatever be his nature or character. Who hath given unto him? Even the goodness of Christ 'extendeth not to him, but to the saints that are in the earth.'

"After the most serious and attentive application to the subject, it appears to me that there is a real difference between satisfaction, merit, &c. as made in cases of debt and credit, and in cases of *crime*, where the injury respects character and government. In the one case, a full satisfaction made by a surety to a creditor, precludes the exercise of forgiving mercy on his part towards the debtor. But it is not so in the other, as I suppose, is sufficiently manifest by the similitude in chapter iv. Part ii. The Scriptures also appear to me always to represent the death of Christ as making perfect satisfaction to divine justice; not as conferring a benefit, which should lay the Father under a natural obligation, in some form to repay; but as doing that which was well pleasing in his sight, and which his infinite love of righteousness would necessarily induce him to reward. Ps. xv. 7. Isa. liii. 10—12. John x. 17. Ephes. v. 2. Phil. ii. 6—11.

Christ was 'made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.' By the law here I understand the covenant of works; for in no other character are we redeemed from under it. The covenant of works contained a threatening of death, in case of disobedience; and by implication a promise, in case of disobedience. Christ by his sacrifice atoned for our breach of that covenant; and this being connected with a course of unspotted obedience, he obtained for us a *title* to eternal life. But as it would have been only by a merit of congruity, had we kept the covenant, that we should have enjoyed eternal life; does it not follow, that it was the same *kind* of merit by which we are reinstated in the divine favour? I do not mean to compare the merit of Christ and that of the purest creatures, in point of worth, but merely as to its nature and kind; and which appears to me to be the only possible kind that can be exercised towards God.

"Such, my dear and venerable friend, are the reasons for what I have advanced. You have wished me to revise

the Note, and to express myself a little differently, or put it into a hypothetical form, if I can do so consistently with my own views. I thank you for the interest you take in the acceptableness of my writings. It has also been suggested from another quarter, that by acknowledging spiritual blessings bestowed on us, to be acts of remunerative justice towards Christ, I have retracted, rather than explained the Note. Be it so then: if what I said before be inconsistent with this truth, I do retract it; though I must assure you that I never intended any thing different. A. F."

ON FAITH AND JUSTIFICATION:

In a Letter to Mr. Maclean.

In December, 1796, the Rev. Mr. Simeon of Cambridge was at Edinburgh, and preached a sermon from Mark xvi. 15, 16. After it was printed, an anonymous writer animadverted upon it in a pamphlet, entitled, "David and Jonathan;" which a gentleman in Edinburgh transmitted to Mr. Fuller, with his own remarks upon the subject. Mr. Fuller replied to his letter, and soon after received one from Mr. Maclean, who was supposed to be the author of the pamphlet; and to him the following letter was addressed, in answer to his objections. It is possible that most of the sentiments have been given under another form, in some of the Author's later publications; but as the letter itself is unpublished and entire, and contains a concise view of the principal points in dispute, it was judged expedient to give it an insertion in this place.

"*July*, 1797.

"Dear Sir,

"If your letter had barely contained a statement of your ideas on certain subjects on which I have already fully written my mind, I might have declined a particular reply; and on account of bodily indisposition, and various necessary avocations, this would have been much more agreeable to me. But by the consequences which you charge on my views of Faith and Justification, I am constrained to be explicit on that subject.

"The substance of what has been advanced, in reference to these points, is reducible to three questions; namely, whether faith includes in it an exercise of the heart—if it does, whether it be not confounded with love and hope—and whether it renders justification, after all, to be by works?

"I had asked, 'If faith be a mere assent of the understanding, and have nothing of moral good in it, how can it be the object of *command*? How can it be a *duty*?' You answer, "By a mere assent of the understanding, you must mean a belief of the testimony of God, grounded upon his authority and faithfulness. This you think has nothing of moral good in it." That I think a mere assent of the understanding has nothing of moral good in it, is true; but why *must* I mean by a mere assent of the understanding, a belief of the testimony of God, grounded upon his authority and faithfulness? The very point in dispute is, whether such a belief does not include more than a mere assent of the understanding. To suppose, therefore, that I must mean this, is to suppose that I *must* grant you the very point in dispute.

"The intellectual faculty, I suppose, is capable of nothing more than *knowledge;* but that faith or credence is something more than knowledge. A man may understand that which he does not believe; yet he cannot be said to disbelieve it, if he understand nothing about it. An assent of the understanding is a matter of judgment, which regards the *meaning* of the testifier, rather than of faith, which relates to the *truth* of the testimony. And if it be merely an exercise of the understanding, that is, if it be not influenced by any bias of heart, it contains neither good nor evil of a moral kind, but is purely natural. Such an assent is not an object of *command*, is not a *duty*, nor is the opposite of it a *sin*. Diligent and impartial examination is a duty; but knowledge itself, I conceive is not. It is true there is a knowledge to which eternal life is promised, which is duty; and an ignorance which is threatened with divine vengeance, 2 Thes. i. 8, and which therefore must be sin. But neither is the former a mere exercise of the intellectual faculty, nor the latter a mere defect of that exercise. That ignorance which is threatened with divine vengeance, you will allow, is a *voluntary* ignorance, which includes a mixture of that evil temper which hateth the light. John viii. 43. Hence it is called *the blindness of the heart*. Ephes. iv. 18. Hence also 'David,' in his dialogue with 'Jonathan,' p. 15, very properly describes it as an *evil eye*. And I suppose that the knowledge to which eternal life is promised includes a mixture of holy love. When the terms ignorance and knowledge are used in this sense, which they frequently

are in Scripture, I consider them as used, not in a literal but in a figurative sense, as when God is said not to *know* certain characters at the day of judgment.

"David in his dialogue admits of the distinction between *spiritual* knowledge, and that which is merely *speculative*, though he contends, and very justly, that the latter "implies some very essential imperfection and error." The *reason* of this imperfection and error is also very properly suggested by David. His words are—"After all that we can say of the speculative knowledge of practical truth, we must still remember that it implies some very essential imperfection and error." David here seems to intimate, that *practical* truth is not discernible by *speculative* knowledge.

"Now what David calls speculative knowledge, I call a mere exercise of the intellectual or speculative faculty; and so for once we are agreed, that the knowledge of practical truth is more than a mere exercise of intellect. Again: what he calls *spiritual* knowledge, and which is the only true knowledge of practical truth, is the same as that which I have mentioned as having eternal life connected with it. But that which is *spiritual*, whether it be knowledge or faith, cannot be a mere exercise of the intellectual faculty, for the term *spiritual* denotes as much as *holy;* but holiness necessarily includes some affection of the heart, and is not predicable of simple intelligence.

"That which distinguishes faith from a mere exercise of the intellectual faculty, and which constitutes its morality, is, that it includes *a treating of God either as the God of truth, or as a liar.* Hence, as you very properly express it, "it is *right* to believe all that God says, and exceeding *wrong* to hold him as a liar." You go on to ask, "why may not belief be an object of command as well as love?" Do I deny then that it is so? If indeed belief included nothing more than an exercise of the intellectual faculty, I should deny it, because I am persuaded that the heart, and its genuine expressions, are the whole of what God requires; but viewing belief as I do, I readily admit it to be an object of *command.* You add, "and if it be both *right* in itself, and the object of *command,* it must certainly be a *duty.*" Very true, sir, and in this short passage you have said all I wish to plead for: whether you will allow the terms, moral good, moral excellence, or virtue, to pertain to the nature of faith, or not; while you adhere to this, I am satisfied.

"If these be your views of faith, which I am persuaded is the case, say what you will, you do not consider it as a natural but as a moral exercise. And while you allow faith to be *right*, you need not argue as you do, "that though it should contain no intrinsic virtue or moral excellence in itself, yet it does not follow that unbelief could contain no sin." Nor do I think this argument conclusive. You plead, that though there may be no virtue in a thing, yet there may be sin in its opposite; and instance in "the abstinence from various crimes, eating when we are hungry, and believing a human testimony." There may indeed be no virtue in these things as they are generally performed by apostate creatures: but if they were performed as God requires them to be, (which they should, in order to be the opposites of the sense you mention,) they would contain real virtue. God requires us to abstain from all sin, *from a regard to his name;* to eat and drink, and do whatsoever we do, to his glory; and we are to credit the testimony of a friend when we have reason to do so." These things thus performed, would be truly virtuous—Whatever is capable of being done by a moral agent, with an eye to the glory of God, ought to be so done; and if it be so done, it is right or virtuous: if not, it is wrong or sinful.

"It appears to me that the idea against which you argue is *merit*, rather than duty. I plead only for *duty*, which is the very principle by which, according to the reasoning of our Lord, merit is excluded. Luke xvi. 10. If it be necessary in order "to refuse some praise to the creature," to deny that faith is an exercise of virtue; it must be equally necessary to deny that it is a *right* exercise, a *commanded* exercise, and what is a part of our *duty;*" for these are the same things.

"While you allow faith to be both '*right* in itself, and an object of *command*, and consequently a *duty;*' to what purpose do you object against my contending for its morality? "If we are not justified by faith as a virtue, you say, of what importance is it to contend for the moral excellence of faith? Why so solicitous to find something in it more than belief? Why is that held insufficient for justification?" This, by the by, is a misstatement. I do not pretend to find any thing more in faith than belief. Belief itself, I suppose, includes in it all that I contend for. And as to the importance of the morality of faith, ask yourself: If we are not justified by faith as a compliance with what "in

itself is *right*," as obedience to "the *command* of God," or as the performance of "a *duty*," of what importance is it to contend for it as being either this or that? You can easily give an answer to this question; and by so doing, you will answer that which you have put to me.

"And if while you allow faith to be right, you attribute 'all the virtue and influence which is ascribed to it in justification, to its object,' rather than to any intrinsic rightness which itself contains, you do what I heartily approve; and in so doing, whether you can understand my distinguishing between justification by faith on account of its relation to its object, and justification by it as a virtue or not, you maintain the same thing.

"You seem certain that I consider faith 'as a temper or disposition of heart corresponding to the truth believed.' If you be certain of it, it is more than I am. I say it *includes* such a temper; but I do not suppose it would be a proper definition of faith, to call it a disposition of the heart corresponding with revealed truth. To give God credit or discredit, seems better to agree with the idea of *an exercise of the soul*, than of a temper or disposition. It is actually treating God either as the God of truth, or as a liar. It has more of a disposition in it than you seem willing to acknowledge; and more of an assent to truth than the notion of it which you ascribe to me. It is what the Scriptures call *a receiving of the love of the truth, that we may be saved.* 2 Thess. ii. 10. You may easily perceive that I do not consider it either as an exercise of the understanding to the exclusion of the will, or of the will to the exclusion of the understanding. To distinguish the powers of the soul is in many cases very proper, and to distinguish the natural from the moral powers, is of importance: but I conceive there are several mental exercises, and perhaps all those which are of a spiritual or holy nature, which cannot be said to be exercises of a single power, *but of the soul*, without distinction of its powers. Such are repentance, hope, and fear; and such I conceive is faith.

"As to my confounding faith with hope and love, which the apostle declares to be *three*, I have already answered this objection; and I must say that your reply is far from being satisfactory. Whether my considering them as distinct with regard to their objects, include all the distinction that there is between them or not, you admit "hope to include desire," which is the same thing as its including

love. Hope, you say, 'is a modification of love.' Hope, therefore, according to your own acknowledgment, though distinguished from love, yet is not so distinct from it, but that it includes a portion of it. But if this may be said of hope, there is no good reason to be drawn from this passage why it may not also be said of faith. 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

"If faith include an exercise of the will, *David* 'would be at a loss to account for the superiority of love.' (pp. 18, 19.) By the same rule he must be at a loss to account for its superiority to hope, since he allows hope to "include desire," that is to say, it includes love, and is "a modification of it." Does not the apostle himself suggest wherein consists the superiority of love; namely, its *perpetuity?* 'Love never faileth.' Faith shall terminate in vision, and hope in fruition; but love shall rise and increase to all eternity.

"Again: if faith include 'the assent of the will, with the concurrence of the warmest affections, David would be unable to see why faith, and not love, unites us to Christ.' (p. 19.) This objection proceeds upon the supposition that faith not only *includes* love, but that it *is* love; or that faith and love are the same thing. In this case, no doubt, it would be impossible to discern why faith should unite us to Christ rather than love, seeing there would be no difference between the one and the other. But though faith may include a portion of love, it does not follow from thence that it is in no respect distinguishable from it; or that there are not some effects ascribable to faith, on account of its *peculiar* properties, which are not to be ascribed to love. Justification *includes* the forgiveness of sins, yet it is not the same thing as forgiveness; and there are some things ascribable to the former, namely, a title to eternal life, which do not belong to the latter. Rom. v. 18, 21.

"You seem greatly jealous on the subject of *meetness;* and so does Dr. Stuart, who fears my views on this subject will 'impair my preaching and experience.' I am truly obliged to both him and you, for your anxiety on this head. Both your letters on this subject made a deep impression on my heart. I could have watered each of them with tears. There would however have been some difference. Over *his* I could have shed tears of trembling self-diffidence, lest what he suggested might be true, and lest I should in any degree, though unwittingly, dishonour

Him whom my soul loveth. Over *yours* I could have wept for grief. The mixture of tartness, and unkind insinuation, which on some occasions accompany your reasonings, was not the most pleasant. It seemed to me unsuitable to brotherly discussion. But this I pass over, and attend to the subject.

"By a few rough notes which I have of my letter to Dr. Stuart, I think, among other things, I asked, 'May not faith include the acquiescence of the heart, and so be a moral exercise; and may there not be a fitness in God's justifying persons who thus acquiesce, without any foundation being laid for boasting? Though faith be a moral exercise, yet I do not consider that it is on account of its morality, but its relation to Christ, that justification is ascribed to it.'

"On this you remark, that 'the distinction between this and being justified by faith *as a virtue*, is too fine; for if this fitness in God's justifying arises from the moral excellency of faith, we must undoubtedly be justified by faith as a virtue in some sense or other.'

"You will admit, I think, of a fitness between justification and believing; or that it is wisely ordered, that believers should be justified rather than unbelievers. Otherwise you must suppose that God does what there is no reason or fitness in doing.

"Farther, you suppose believing to include a *knowledge* of Christ, at least such a knowledge as 'perceives and realizes the object;' and this you will admit to precede justification, and that there is a fitness in its doing so. Yet you do not maintain that our realizing perception of Christ's righteousness, but Christ's righteousness itself, is that on account of which God justifies us. Now why may I not maintain the same, though I consider the belief of the gospel as including a cordial acquiescence in it?

"If you allege, there is no other *fitness* in God's justifying a person on his believing, in your sense of the term, than *a fitness of wisdom;* none which undermines the freeness of grace, or which bears any resemblance to the notion of those who talk of a merit of congruity; and that for this reason,—there being nothing of moral good included in the nature of faith, there can be no ground for a *moral fitness* in the sinner being justified by it.

"To this I answer—(1.) You do allow faith to include moral good, though in some places you write as though you did not. You allow it to be "*right* in itself, a *command*

of God, a *duty*, and the contrary a *sin*, as making God a liar." You must admit, therefore, that though we are justified by that which is *right*, is a *command*, is a *duty*; yet it is not *on account* of its rightness, or of its being an obedience to the divine command, or a compliance with duty; but merely on account of the object in which it terminates. And if this distinction be not "too fine" for you, neither will that to which you object in me; for it is the same thing.—(2.) *A fitness of wisdom* is the whole for which I plead. It appears to be wisely ordered that no person should share the blessing of justification through the righteousness of Christ, till he heartily acquiesce in that way of saving sinners. Yet it is not his acquiescence that is any ground of his acceptance, but that in which he acquiesces.

"I will try and state another case or two, which may throw some light upon that in question. Let us suppose Pharaoh's daughter, who was married to king Solomon, to have been a poor outcast, and even defiled; yet Solomon sends his servants to invite her to the most intimate and honourable union. At first she feels attached to her lovers, and refuses—at length, however, her mind is changed. She is married to him; and that moment becomes interested in his crown and possessions. Perhaps you would admit the fitness in this case, that she should first be united with Solomon, ere she become interested in his possessions; and with such a kind of union too, as should include a renunciation of all her former lovers and illicit practices. Yet virtuous as this union might be, and wicked as it would have been in her to have still adhered to her lovers, you would never imagine that she was put in possession of the crown on account of her marriage, considered *as an exercise of virtue*, or as a *reward* for it. Nor would she, if a true penitent, ever think of arrogating to herself any merit for acquiescing in the king's proposal, or consenting to do as she had done; but rather be confounded on account of her former wickedness, and especially that she should have been so attached to it as for a time to despise the riches of his goodness. If a question had been put to her in the height of her glory, by one that had known her in former times, 'And what is this that is come to you? On what ground or title have you the possession of all these riches?' She might have answered to this effect: 'They were not mine; I neither laboured for them, nor inherited them from any one that was naturally related to me. They were

king Solomon's; and he, from a wonderful attachment to me, in which he seems to have been determined, by an act of overwhelming kindness, to display his native generosity, conferred them upon me. I have them in virtue of marriage. That which accomplished my union to the king, at the same time put me in possession of these riches. All that I enjoy is by marriage: for what was I? It is of marriage, that it might be of grace.'

"I do not pretend to say, that this case will throughout apply to that of Christ and his church; but I conceive they are sufficiently alike to illustrate the argument. Union with Christ is that which in the order of things precedes justification. 'Of him are ye *in Christ Jesus*, who of God is made unto us righteousness—that I may be found *in him*, not having mine own righteousness, but that which is by the faith of Christ.' 1 Cor. i. 31. Phil. iii. 9. David admits this in his dialogue, p. 19. This union with Christ is to be of *one spirit* with him; and this being by faith, it is hence that by faith we are justified.

"It is here I think I can perceive the peculiar relation that faith bears to Christ. Such a belief of the gospel as that whereby we embrace his way of salvation with our whole soul, renders Christ and us 'no more twain,' but *one spirit*. 1 Cor. vi. 17. This is analogous to the joining act in marriage. Whatever love there might be in such an act, and however necessary such love might be to render it sincere, or whatever love might follow after, it is not this, but the act of marriage, that so unites the parties as that the one shall be interested in the possessions of the other.

"In short, by the above representation, I can see a cordial and virtuous acquiescence necessary to the enjoyment of an advantage, and a fitness in its being so; yet not such a fitness as those maintain, who speak of a merit of congruity, but a fitness of wisdom.

"Again: there is a fitness of wisdom in the established connection between *repentance and the remission of sins*. That such a connection exists throughout the Scriptures, I imagine you will not deny. Neither can you doubt whether repentance be a moral exercise of mind: yet you will not say that this moral exercise is that *on account of which we are forgiven;* but that it is wholly *for Christ's sake*, as much as we are justified wholly for the sake of his righteousness. Here again, you must make use of the distinc-

tion which you say is 'too fine.' It is true, repentance does not occupy the same place with respect to forgiveness, as faith does with respect to justification, for we are not said to be forgiven *by* repentance; yet the connection is as real in the one case as in the other. Forgiveness follows upon repentance, *which is a virtue, and it is fit it should*, rather than go before it: and yet it is not for the sake of that virtue, but of the blood-shedding of Christ, that we are forgiven.

"You allow, and that rightly, that justification *includes* the forgiveness of sins: if there be no forgiveness therefore without repentance, which the Scriptures abundantly teach, there can be no justification without repentance. Consequently, repentance must be implied or included in the very nature of justifying faith, as much as the forgiveness of sin is included in justification. Nor does this idea confound faith and repentance, any more than the other confounds justification and pardon.

"Once more: there is a fitness of wisdom in the established connection between *receiving Christ*, and having *power*, right or privilege, *to become the sons of God.* John i. 12. And *receiving Christ*, I think you will admit to be a holy or moral exercise, including the concurrence of the will. It is the direct opposite of rejecting him, or *receiving him not*, verse 11. Yet you will not say that it is a *reward* for having received him, that he confers upon us the blessing of adoption. We are predestinated to that relation merely of grace, *by Jesus Christ;* and not as the reward of any thing good in us. Here then you must again admit of a distinction which you say is 'too fine.' Adoption follows upon receiving Christ, *which is a virtue;* and it is wisely ordered that it should; yet it is not for the sake of that virtue, but from the free grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, that we of aliens are made sons.

"If can find opportunity, I may take some notice of the other parts of your letter at some future time. Meanwhile I only say, that writing upon subjects of difference is as unpleasant to me as it can be to you, and perhaps more so, on account of the indisposition that attends me; and having stated my views, I do not intend to keep up a controversy. If I can receive any fresh light from your communications, I shall be obliged to you; but probably I shall not largely reply any more.

VALIDITY OF LAY ORDINATION.

"While I was at Aberdeen, I was waited upon by a deputation, consisting of the pastor, a deacon, and another member of a little Baptist church, lately formed at New Byth, near Old Deer, Aberdeenshire. A Baptist minister now in Norfolk, was the Episcopal minister at Old Deer, till the year 1799. At that time his views were altered concerning baptism; and he went to London, and was baptized by Mr. Booth. Soon after a Baptist church of ten members, out of his former congregation, was formed in the neighbourhood. The church then proceeded to choose one of their members to be their pastor: and on March 26th, 1803, they set him apart to that office by prayer. Some of the members, however, were not satisfied as to the validity of his ordination, seeing there were no pastor or pastors from other churches present to join in it. A few of them had communed together at the Lord's table; but the rest stood aloof, merely on this account. Their errand to me was, to request my judgment on the validity of his ordination; and if I thought it invalid, that I would come and ordain him.

"I told them, if there had been any other pastors of churches within their reach, it would have been proper to request their concurrence and assistance; and that if I had been there at the time, I should have had no objection to have joined in prayer, and in the laying on of hands. But as things were, I could not see how they could have acted otherwise than they had done. And as to my now ordaining him, I could do no such thing; partly because it would imply that I thought him not as yet their pastor, which was not true; and partly because it would convey an idea of my having to impart to another minister some power or authority, of which I had no conception. My advice was, that they should all be satisfied with what was done."

PROPRIETY OF ADMINISTERING THE LORD'S SUPPER WITHOUT A MINISTER.

When Mr. Fuller was in Edinburgh, in the year 1805, he communed with a newly formed Baptist church in that city, not then provided with a pastor; and at their request he administered the Lord's supper among them. Previous to this, they had been in the habit of commemorating the

death of Christ in this ordinance, without a minister; but wished to know his opinion on the subject.

"I told them," says Mr. Fuller, "that probably there were few of my brethren who might be of my mind; but I had long been of opinion, that there was no scriptural authority for confining the administration of the Lord's supper to a minister. I had no doubt but that the primitive pastors *did* preside at the Lord's table, as well as in the reception and exclusion of members, and in short in all the proceedings of the church; and that where there was a pastor, it was proper he should continue to do so. But that when a pastor died, or was removed, the church was not obliged to desist from commemorating the Lord's death, any more than from receiving or excluding members; and that it was as lawful for them to appoint a deacon, or any senior member, to preside in the one case as in the other.

"Neither did I recollect that any minister is said to have administered the Lord's supper, unless we consider our Saviour as sustaining that character at the time of its institution; and this silence of the Scriptures concerning the administrator, appeared to me to prove that it was a matter of indifference. Finally, I told them that it was not the practice of our English churches; that they, many of them, would send for the pastors of other churches to perform this office; and that I for one had often complied with such requests. I could wish, however, it were otherwise, and that every church, when destitute of a pastor, would attend to the Lord's supper among themselves.

"It is the practice of this and all the Baptist churches in Scotland, to commemorate the Lord's death *every* Lord's day. I do not think this to be *binding*, but am persuaded there can be nothing wrong in it, and that *probably* it was the practice of the primitive churches."

STRICT COMMUNION.

The subject of Strict Communion, which has of late been so much agitated, more than once engaged Mr. Fuller's attention; and had he lived to see the able pamphlets which have since been written, there is no doubt but he would have entered more deeply into the subject. During the first year of his public ministry, as has already been observed, p. 24, he wrote some "Reflections" on a small pamphlet published by Mr. Browne of Kettering, and on

another by Mr. Robinson of Cambridge, both of them in favour of open communion. These gentlemen became advocates for the practice on rather different grounds; the former alleging that it was most agreeable to Christian charity, and the latter that it ought to be allowed on the ground of religious toleration; while both maintained that baptism, in some form or other, was indispensably necessary to Christian communion. Mr. Fuller availed himself of this admission, and remarked that it was fatal to their argument; for in dispensing with what in their judgment is essential to baptism, they in effect dispensed with the ordinance itself; and then with marvellous inconsistency, made it a term of communion.

The substance of this manuscript, written in 1774, was embodied in a posthumous pamphlet, prepared by the author a few months only before his decease, and contains of course his mature thoughts upon the subject. In attempting to prove "the admission of unbaptized persons to the Lord's supper, inconsistent with the New Testament," Mr. Fuller states the question to be, whether baptism has any such *instituted connection* with the Lord's supper, as to become an indispensable prerequisite? And certainly, nothing short of express divine authority can be allowed to decide a case of such vital importance to the interests of practical and social religion. Mr. Fuller finds this *instituted connection*, first in the literal order of the apostolic commission, which gives a precedence to baptism, but without specifying *the supper;* and next, in the order of events. "All the recorded facts in the New Testament, place baptism before the celebration of the Lord's supper."

CHAPTER XII.

Last year of Mr. Fuller's Life—His Reflections on the Death of Mr. Sutcliffe—Attends a Missionary Ordination at Leicester—Commencement of his last Illness—Sketch of his last Sermon in London—Ordination at Clipstone—His last Sermon at Kettering—Farewell Letter to Dr. Ryland—Particulars of his Death—Extracts from Mr. Toller's Sermon on the occasion—Funeral solemnities of Mr. Fuller.

NOTWITHSTANDING his stout athletic frame, Mr. Fuller appears to have been constitutionally bilious, and susceptible of those distressing complaints usually considered as arising from diseased liver. His vital organs, in other re-

spects, were sound and vigorous; and he both required and enjoyed, strong muscular exercise, intermixed with his sedentary employment. When long at home, he was subject to distressing head-aches and bilious affections, excited by intense application to writing, but from these he was generally relieved by travelling. Yet the remedy, in the issue, if it did not aggravate the disease, demanded those resources which the human constitution was unable to supply. When in the best state of health, Mr. Fuller used to say, he did not expect a long life, and that probably he should never live to the age of three score and ten; and the event too well justified these forebodings.

At a later period, he often laboured under various attacks of difficult breathing, cough, indigestion, bilious sickness, and feverish symptoms; which were greatly increased by fatigue, exposure to cold or humid air, especially after preaching, and exertions of this kind too frequently repeated, and sometimes too long continued. He was scarcely ever mindful of his health, except in reference to two things,—damp beds, and an easterly wind. These he anxiously avoided; and the latter especially he considered as his most dangerous foe. All the rest took their chance, while he pursued his labours unapprised of any danger. Though he was not at any time very corpulent, yet of late years he sunk considerably in flesh; and it was remarked at the first annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, held in London, "that he brought all his soul with him, but only half his body."

During the last year of his life, he visited Olney, Bedford, Leicester, and some parts of Essex; and, on his return, attended the annual meetings in the city, June 22, 1814; where on the preceding evening, he preached from Titus i. 15. His intimate friend, Mr. Sutcliffe, of Olney, died on the following evening. On the 28th he went to his interment, and preached his funeral sermon, of which a brief review has been given in page 177. It was natural enough to notice the words of a dying friend, and especially for such a mind as Mr. Fuller's to attempt some improvement of them. He accordingly remarked in conversation, a little while afterwards—

"I have been thinking of what brother Sutcliffe said to me a few days before his death:—'I wish I had prayed more.' So I wish that I had prayed more. I do not suppose that brother Sutcliffe meant that he wished he had

prayed more frequently, but more *spiritually*. I wish I had prayed more for the influences of the Holy Spirit; I might have enjoyed more of the power of vital godliness. I wish I had prayed more for the assistance of the Holy Spirit, in studying and preaching my sermons; I might have seen more of the blessing of God attending my ministry. I wish I had prayed more for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to attend the labours of our friends in India; I might have witnessed more of the effects of their efforts in the conversion of the heathen."

Much as he felt this bereavement, together with his own increasing infirmities, it did not damp the ardour of his exertions. In the course of the following month, he made a tour through Lancashire and Yorkshire, preaching the gospel, communicating information of the mission, and endeavouring to impress the churches and Christians in general with just sentiments of its importance, and to obtain funds for its support. On his return from this excursion, he was observed to be less animated in his preaching than formerly; and the altered appearance of his health gave painful indications to his friends, that his labours were drawing to a close.

On the 31st of August following, he was a second time at Leicester, assisting in the ordination of Mr. Yates, who was preparing to join the Baptist missionaries in India. He appeared remarkably solemn, and was deeply affected on the occasion, preaching and praying as one standing on the verge of eternity. He was then in an ill state of health, and felt a strong presentiment that he should see his Leicester friends no more. But nothing moved him: his only wish was, to finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he has received, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. During the interview at Leicester, he was overwhelmed with anxieties and cares about the mission, an object ever near his heart, so that few of his friends could have any conversation with him. At every interval he laid his pocket book before him, as was usual; and then, forgetting every other subject, religious intelligence of one kind or other was communicated. Before the services of the day were ended, he sunk under the weight of his infirmities, and was obliged to send for medical assistance; but his disorder, which is said to have arisen from a scirrhous liver, admitted only of a little temporary relief. He acknowledged that "he was very ill,"

adding that "his work was nearly done; but that he could not spare time to nurse himself, and he must labour as long as he could."

Early in September, after preaching on a Lord's day morning, he was taken so ill as to be unable to attend public worship in the afternoon. On the 30th, he wrote to a friend as follows:

"Since I saw you I have been brought very low. About a month ago I had a bilious attack, from which, having often had it before, I expected no serious consequences; but, after two or three days, I was seized with violent inflammation, I suppose in the liver. I had a high fever, was bled, blistered, and confined to my bed for a week. I took calomel medicines; after this the fever abated, and my medical attendant considered the danger as over. My appetite has returned, and I have been out in the air pretty much; but the soreness in my right side is still such that I know not how to sleep upon it, and my strength recruits very slowly."

Three weeks afterwards, writing to another friend, he says:

"I have preached only twice for the last five or six weeks; but am gradually, though slowly recovering. Since I was laid by from preaching, I have written out my sermon, and drawn up a Memoir of my dear brother Sutcliffe. Your partiality for the Memoir of dear Pearce, will ensure me one reader at least for that of Sutcliffe. I hope the great and good Mr. Charles of Bala, will find some one who will do justice to his memory. Mrs. Sutcliffe died on the 3d of September, less than eleven weeks after her husband. Death has swept away almost all my old friends; and I seem to stand expecting to be called for soon. It matters not when, so that we be found in Christ."

In another letter, written about the same time, he says:

"Brother Sutcliffe's last end was enviable: let mine be like his! Death has been making havoc of late amongst us. Yesterday I preached a funeral sermon, if so it might be called, for three of the members of our church, lately deceased. I feel as one who has the sentence of death, and whose great concern it is, whether my religion will bear the test! Almost all my old friends are dead or dying! Well, I have a hope that bears me up; and it is through grace. In reviewing my life, I see much evil—'God be merciful to me a sinner!'"

In a very weak state of health, he still persevered in his endeavours to serve the mission. In the preceding July, he had been a journey into Yorkshire; but being obliged to return before he could fully accomplish his object, he determined to complete his progress in that quarter, and to visit the churches which he had not then visited. Accordingly, on the 10th of October, he took with him two junior ministers for this purpose; but having reached Newark upon Trent, he become feverish the first night, and could take no rest. He was therefore obliged to return home, and requested his companions to proceed on their journey.

On the 5th of November following, he said:

"I mend a little, keeping free from all fatigue and wet weather; but I can preach only once a day—twice leaves a soreness in the place where the inflammation was. I feel the force of Eccles. xii. 1, last clause; and have lately preached with much feeling on Psalm lxxi. 9. 'Cast me not off in old age: forsake me not when my strength faileth.'"

Notwithstanding the delicate state of his health, and the unfavourable season of the year, he ventured on a journey to London in the month of December, which added fresh excitement to his disorder. This was his last visit to the metropolis, and it is highly probable that his own mind was deeply impressed with a presentiment that such would be the case. He continued there only one Lord's day; viz. Dec. 18th, in the evening of which he preached a discourse at the meeting house in Carter Lane, for the benefit of "The British and Foreign School Society;" and as this may be regarded as his farewell sermon to his London friends, it may not be uninteresting to give a brief account of it in this place.

His text was, Daniel xii. 4. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." This he considered to be a prophecy which had an immediate respect to the present time; and in order to illustrate the subject, he proceeded to explain—the kind of knowledge there referred to—and the means by which it was to be increased.

"As to the first of these," said he, "we have heard much of late years of *philosophical illumination*, which, by excluding the Bible, is to meliorate the condition of man; and we have seen some of its effects. It is something remarkable, that from the time when the Bible was to be

thrown aside as useless, it has been more in request, and more extensively circulated. Partial as unbelievers may be to their own kind of knowledge, they cannot expect that its prevalence should be an object of Scripture prophecy. No: the knowledge of which the Scriptures make account, is that of which the fear of the Lord is the beginning. We may depend upon it that it is Bible-knowledge, or the Bible would not have predicted it with approbation. It is that which 'the wicked will not understand, but the wise shall understand it.' It is the knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. With this, however, must be included the first principles, at least, of human science, as subservient to it; inasmuch as the end includes the means which lead to it.

"It is the glory of Christ's kingdom, that it is established and promoted by knowledge. It invites examination, and courts humble inquiry. Is it thus with paganism, or mahometanism, or apostate judaism, or deism, or corrupt christianity? No: these are works of darkness, for the dispelling of which many shall run to and fro, as with the lamp of truth in their hands.

"We have a *written* religion: and though it is not essential to salvation that we should be able to read and write, yet these are essential to our making any considerable proficiency in the knowledge of God. Without being able to read we cannot 'search the scriptures,' nor 'meditate in the law of the Lord by day and by night.' It is a great disadvantage to a hearer of the gospel, to be unable to compare what he hears with the word of God. Nor is it less so to a minister, or a missionary, in addressing such auditors. It might therefore be presumed, that prior to the general spread of the gospel, there would be a general diffusion of knowledge even amongst the lower classes of mankind.

"Secondly. Respecting the *means* by which knowledge shall be increased—'many shall run to and fro;' that is, they that possess it shall be desirous of imparting it to others. There may be a desire to impart knowledge without possessing it: some good men, like Ahimaaz, are eager to run while yet they have no tidings, and some vain men have an itch to be teachers, when it would rather become them to learn. Those who possess knowledge, however, would do well to impart it according to their ability.

"It is chiefly by means of instruction that men are 'wiser than the beasts of the field.' We are born, it is true, with

capacious and immortal powers; but while the mind is uninformed, they are of but small account. Knowledge enters principally at the door of the senses. To what do we owe the gift of speech? It may seem to be natural to us; but if we are born deaf, we shall also be dumb; and if with this we are blind, there would be but little difference in point of knowledge, between us and other animals. Why is man so long in growing up to maturity? Other animals attain theirs in a short time compared with him. Is it not that there may be opportunity for instruction? Both may possess like powers: but the one is instructed, while the other is not. Many poor boys and girls in a country village, who cannot read, and never hear the gospel, nor converse with wise men, are very little if any thing superior to savages. Who can read the pathetic lines of Gray, when looking at the graves of the poor in a country church-yard, without dropping a tear of sympathy?

> "Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
> Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
> Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
> Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.
> But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
> Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
> Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
> And froze the genial current of the soul."

"A portion of this evil may always continue to be the lot of the poor in the present life; but it may be considerably diminished; and when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters do the sea, it will be so. God hath so ordered things, that we should be blessings to one another. One generation passeth not away, till he has reared another to take its place. We might all have been called alone and blessed, like Abraham; but as in blessing him, God made him a blessing to the nations, it is in some respects the same with us. If he gives us the cup of salvation we must hand it round. If he gives us knowledge, or riches, or any other gift, we must not keep it to ourselves, but 'run to and fro' that we may impart it.

"If it be the design of God to diffuse the knowledge of himself over the earth in these last days, it might be expected that suitable means and instruments would be employed to accomplish it. When he meant to rear a tabernacle in the wilderness, he raised up Bezaleel and Aholiab, and other wise-hearted men, in whom he put wisdom and understanding. Thus we might expect men to be gifted

and qualified for the work appointed them, and to be stirred up to engage in it. It might be expected, supposing a great work was designed to be accomplished, that societies would be formed, some to translate the sacred Scriptures into the languages of the nations, some to give them circulation, some to scatter tracts which shall impress their leading principles, some to preach the gospel, and some to teach the rising generation to read and write.

"Who can observe the movements of the present times, without perceiving on them the finger of God? They may not have risen just in the order above described. The institution of Sunday Schools, as they are called, for the children of the poor, took the lead about thirty years ago; since then other institutions of various kinds have followed; but they have all risen nearly together, and all indicate a divine design. They form a whole, and like the different parts of a machine, all work together.

"Among those institutions, which have already attracted the attention of Europe, and not of Europe only, that which is now called 'The British and Foreign School Society' claims our attention. And such a Society is wanted, to give success to all other institutions for the diffusion of knowledge; for if the world were full of Bibles, it would be of little avail if the people were not taught to read them. Is not the British system of education an engine capable of moving the moral world? From what little I know of it, I am persuaded it is; and that God has caused it to be brought forward for this purpose. Its principle appears to to me to be military. We shall know that astonishing effects are produced in the political world by forming and organizing a number of men, every one filling the most advantageous post, and all acting together in concert. If this principle has been brought to bear in war, why should it not rather be employed in promoting knowledge, and diffusing the blessings of peace? It is of but small account whether it originated with a Bell or with a Lancaster, and whether the societies act in concert or not, so that they do but act. It may be a useful rivalry, and serve to provoke to good works. It requires to be supported, and I trust it will be so. If the nations of Europe who have sent and are sending messengers to learn the principles of our operations, should perceive our hands to slacken in the use of them, it must not only sink us in their esteem, but impede the progress of the work. It is only to be a little more economical, denying ourselves a few of the superfluities of life, and we

may support all these institutions. The expense of one lust is greater than all the taxes of benevolence and religion."

From this imperfect abstract of his sermon, it is not difficult to trace out something of the vigorous mind of Mr. Fuller; but to be able to appreciate in any tolerable degree the height to which the preacher rose upon this occasion, it is necessary to have both heard and seen him. According to the report of several persons of indisputable judgment and veracity, who were favoured with this opportunity, it was one of the greatest of his ministerial efforts, and might have reminded one of the case of Samson, summoning all his remaining strength, in order, by one decisive effort, to subvert the pillars of the house, and bury his adversaries in its ruins. Just so the soul of Fuller—all his mental powers, with their varied energies, appeared to have been collected and concentrated in the delivery of this his farewell sermon. Never will it be forgotten by some who heard him, how impressive and energetic was the whole; but there were parts of it, in which the preacher seemed to resemble the setting sun, at the instant he is about to sink behind the western hills—when, as though loth to quit the horizon, he rekindles his beams, expands his surface, and blazes forth in all his majesty.

In January, 1815, Mr. Fuller considered his health to be much recovered, except that he had taken cold during the frost, which at first affected his lungs, and afterwards almost deprived him of hearing. He was advised to go to Cheltenham, but deferred it to a milder season; in the meantime he took a saline medicine, recommended by Dr. Janner as a substitute for the waters. In the course of this month he revised his piece on Strict Communion, which had originated in a verbal but warm discussion with a highly respected friend, who had frequently opposed his views on this subject, and which was now left for posthumous publication, if circumstances should so require. These few pages afford evidence that his faculties were unimpaired, notwithstanding the declining state of his health. His correspondence also was at this time continued, with but little interruption.

Though incapable of any great exertion, his spirits revived as the spring approached; and on the 29th of March he ventured as far as Clipstone, eleven miles from Kettering, to assist at the ordination of the Rev. John Mack, but was much fatigued with the journey. His address to

the church on this occasion, from 3 John 8, was peculiarly solemn and impressive; and some of the ministers who were present observed, they never heard him to greater advantage. From the manner in which he expressed himself, several of his friends foreboded it would be the last time they should hear him, and that they should see his face no more. Being asked how he found himself after he left the pulpit, his reply was, "I am very ill—a dying man." On a second interview with the same person, he added, "All is over—my work is nearly finished—I shall see you no more; the blessing of the Lord attend you. Farewell."

On the following Sabbath, April 2nd, he appeared for the last time in his own pulpit, where in the afternoon he preached his last sermon, from Isai. lxvi. 1, 2. 'Thus saith the Lord: the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath my hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord. But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.' The last time of administering the Lord's supper, he was remarkably solemn and tender. His words were few, for he was very ill at the time; his friends were much affected, and foreboded that he would not be able to appear among them any more on such an occasion. He seemed to be absorbed in the thoughts of a crucified, risen and exalted Saviour; and never at any time appeared so much in his element, as when dwelling on the doctrine of the atonement.

Serious apprehensions were now entertained of the issue of his complaints; and the anxiety of his friends to prolong if possible his eminently useful life, urged upon his attention the medical advice which had been repeatedly suggested, to make trial of the Cheltenham waters, if so there might be hope. His congregation also, as an expression of their affection and esteem, presented him with fifty pounds towards the expenses of the journey. While he was making his arrangements, he wrote to a minister in the north, on the ninth of April, informing him that "his health was in a low state; that it was hard work for him to write a letter; but he must go to Cheltenham, where he should be obliged to all his friends to let him rest from correspondence." And even to the nineteenth, the same idea is repeated; when in another letter he says,

"I am ordered to go next Monday for Cheltenham. I should be happy to come and see you before I go, if the weather and my affliction would permit. When I shall return is uncertain. My times are in the Lord's hands; but to me all is uncertainty." The pressure of disease now rapidly increasing upon him, frustrated the intentions both of himself and his friends, and the journey was found to be impracticable.

Every succeeding day brought with it additional proof, that the time of his departure was at hand; but he contemplated the hour of its arrival without dismay. He soon became so weak as to be unable to bear an interview with his most intimate friends, more than a few minutes at a time. The warm bath was twice applied without effect, and neither food nor medicine could be administered. His liver was found to be greatly enlarged and hardened. Amidst unusual depression from bodily disease, he enjoyed great calmness of mind, a solid hope, and resignation to the will of God.

The last day he was down stairs was on the 28th of April; when he dictated the following letter to Dr. Ryland, which was written by an amanuensis, and subscribed with his initials.

"My dearest Friend,

"We have enjoyed much together, which I hope will prove an earnest of greater enjoyment in another world. We have also wrought together in the Lord's vineyard, and he has given us to reap together, in a measure, in his vintage. I expect this is nearly over; but I trust we shall meet, and part no more. I have very little hope of recovery; but I am satisfied to drink of the cup which my heavenly Father giveth me to drink. Without experience, no one can conceive of the depression of my spirits; yet I have no despondency. 'I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.' I am a poor guilty creature; but Jesus is an almighty Saviour. I have preached and written much against the *abuse* of the doctrine of grace, but that doctrine is all my salvation, and all my desire. I have no other hope than from mere sovereign, efficacious grace, through the atonement of my Lord and Saviour. With this hope I can go into eternity with composure. Come, Lord Jesus! Come when thou wilt! Here I am; let him do with me as seemeth him good.

"We have some who have been giving it out of late, that 'if Sutcliffe and some others had preached more of Christ, and less of Jonathan Edwards, they would have been more useful.' If those who talk thus, preached Christ half as much as Jonathan Edwards did, and were half as useful as he was, their usefulness would be double what it is. It is very singular that the Mission to the East should have originated with men of these principles; and without pretending to be a prophet, I may say, if it ever falls into the hands of men who talk in this strain, it will soon come to nothing.

"If I should never see your face in the flesh, I could wish one last testimony of brotherly love, and of the truth of the gospel, to be expressed by your coming over, and preaching my funeral sermon, if it can be, from Romans viii. 10. I can dictate no more, but am ever yours,

A. F."

As his end drew near, he complained of great depression and sinking, saying he must die. A friend replied, "I know of no person, Sir, who is in a more happy situation than yourself; a good man, on the verge of a blessed immortality." Mr. Fuller humbly acquiesced, and hoped it was so. He afterwards lifted up his hands, and exclaimed, "I am a great sinner, and if I am saved it must be by great and sovereign grace—by great and sovereign grace!"

His mind continued full of hope; and though he felt nothing approaching to rapture, yet the closing scene was such as strikingly displayed the triumphs of faith. Dropping now and then a few words, he was heard to say that he had nothing to do but to die—and again repeated, "I know whom I have believed." At another time he expressed himself in his own energetic manner, saying, "My hope is such, that I am not afraid to plunge into eternity."

The general vigour of his constitution providing a resistance to the violence of disease, rendered his sufferings peculiarly severe; and towards the last, the conflict assumed a most formidable aspect. Placing his hand on the diseased part, the sufferer exclaimed, "Oh, this *deadly* wound." At another time, "All misery centres *here*." Being asked whether he meant bodily misery, he replied, "Oh yes: I can think of nothing else." His bilious sickness becoming almost incessant, allowed but few opportunities of conversing with his friends; and of course, little could be

known of his dying experience. The following detached sentences, which dropped at different intervals, indicate the general state of his mind during the last days of his illness.

"I feel satisfaction that my times are in the Lord's hands. I have been importuning the Lord, that whether I live it may be to him, or whether I die it may be to him. Flesh and heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. Into thy hands I commit my spirit, my family, and my charge. I have done a little for God; but all that I have done needs forgiveness. I trust in sovereign grace and mercy alone. God is my supporter and my hope. I would say, not my will, but thine be done. God is my soul's eternal rock, the strength of every saint. I am a poor sinner, and my only hope is in the Saviour of sinners."

He repeated more than once, "My breath is corrupt—my days are extinct." Frequently during his affliction, he said, "My mind is calm; no raptures—no despondency." At other times he said, "I am not dismayed. My God, my Saviour, my Refuge, to thee I commit my spirit. Take me to thyself—Bless those I leave behind."

On the morning of his departure, aware of its being the Sabbath, he said to an attendant, just loud enough to be heard, "I wish I had strength to worship with you." He added, "My eyes are dim:" and he appeared to be nearly blind. From eleven till about half past eleven o'clock, sitting up in bed, he was observed to be engaged in prayer. Only two words were distinctly audible—"Help me!" At the close of the prayer, he struggled—fell back—sighed three times—and in five minutes expired. His eyes were fixed upwards, and his hands clasped in death, as in the attitude of prayer. Thus the summons came, to call him to his rest, May 7th, 1815, in the sixty-second year of his age. The tidings spread with great rapidity throughout the town and neighbourhood, and every voice mournfully re-echoed, "He is gone!"

On the following Sabbath, a day previous to the interment, the Rev. T. N. Toller, pastor of the Independent church at Kettering, and the highly respected friend of the deceased, delivered a discourse on the occasion to his own congregation; and chose for his text the pathetic exclamation in 1 Kings xiii. 30. *Alas, my brother!* The just and discriminating remarks, which appear in the fol-

lowing extracts from the sermon, are not less honourable to the preacher than they will be gratifying to the pious and intelligent reader.

"With regard to the much respected friend and Christian minister, lately removed," says Mr. Toller, "it might appear unbecoming and indelicate in me to enter far into his character and case, particularly as this will be done to so much greater advantage on the approaching day; but thus much I could hardly satisfy myself without advancing on this occasion.

"I trust I am sincerely disposed to join in the general and just tribute, which his friends and the public are inclined to pay to his abilities, his sound sense, and solid understanding; and to his unwearied diligence and unconquerable ardour, in supporting and pursuing the interests of the best of causes; and that, not only in the common duties of his profession, but more particularly in the propagation of Christianity in the foreign climes of India. Perhaps no individual, next to the unequalled CAREY, no individual at least at *home*, has done so much to promote that cause; and considering the few advantages of early education which he enjoyed, the eminence to which he has risen, the influence he had acquired, and the means of usefulness which he had collected and secured, are so much the more extraordinary, and reflect the greater credit on his memory.

"The variety and compass of his writings, though all bearing on one grand point, yet serve to show what sheer abilities, sound principle, ardent zeal, and persevering application can do. I have read his works, (some of them more than once) with much satisfaction, and I trust with same improvement; that such improvement has not amounted to more, ought to be attributed to myself. I have not a doubt but that they have been of real and extensive use in the Christian church, in support of the radical principles of evangelical religion, and will continue to be so after his dust shall mingle with the clods of the valley. It is a satisfaction to me to reflect, that in the great leading views of vital Christianity, he expresses very nearly my own sentiments; though it is not to be expected that persons who think for themselves on sacred subjects, should on every point 'see eye to eye.' You will not, therefore, expect that I should profess myself able to subscribe to every ar-

ticle in his theological creed: still, however, it is a pleasure to me to reflect now, that differing only on points of subordinate importance, wherever that was the case, we always *agreed* to differ.

"Though living in the same town, engaged in the same profession, and that under the banners of different denominations, for about thirty years, I do not recollect that ever an angry word passed between us, or a single jar occurred, by our means, among our respective connections. At the same time, I would not mention this in the spirit of a vain compliment, either to him or to myself, but desire to be deeply sensible of a thousand deficiencies and errors in other respects; nor would I be understood, in a servile spirit of fulsome flattery, as representing him as a *faultless* character; or holding him up in all respects as a model of the Christian temper; for alas! of whom can you say, 'be ye followers of him,' unless you insert the restrictive clause, so far as he was 'a follower of Christ.'

"While, then, I think him an eminent loss to his family, a general loss to society and the church of Christ, and perhaps an irreparable loss to his own denomination, I trust I can, with truly Christian cordiality, follow him up to the footstool of his Master's throne, and congratulate him on that 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' which I have no doubt he has received.

"I conclude with remarking, that in no one point, either from his writings which I have read, or the sermons I have heard from him, or the interviews and conversations I have had with him,—in nothing can I so fully join issue with him, as in the manner of his *dying*. Had he gone off full of rapture and transport, I might have said, 'Oh, let me die the triumphant death of the righteous!' But it would have been far more than I could have realized, or expected in my own case: but the state of his mind towards the last, appears to have been, if I may so express it, 'after my own heart.' He died as a *penitent sinner at the foot of the cross.*" At my last parting I shook hands with him twice, and observed, with some emotion, not expecting to see him more, 'we have lived harmoniously many years in the same place; I trust we shall one day meet above." I think the last religious sentence he dropped to me was, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.'

"Being reminded of his missionary labours, he replied, 'Ah! the object was unquestionably good;' but adverted to the *mixture* of motives, to the influence of which we are liable in supporting the best of causes. To another friend, who was congratulating him in a similar style, he replied, 'I have been a great sinner; and if I am saved at all, it must be by great and sovereign grace.' Here the dying minister—the dying friend speaks all my heart: here I come nearer to him at his death than I have ever done through the whole course of his life. The testimony of a Christian conscience is at all times invaluable; but in the dying moments of a fallen creature, it can afford no more than auxiliary support; the grand prominent hold of the trembling soul, must be 'the golden chain that comes down from heaven.' It is the immediate, personal, realizing application; it is the broad palpable hope of salvation for penitent sinners, through the riches of divine grace in Christ Jesus our Lord, that throws every thing else to the shades. It is not the voice of congratulation on the best spent life, however just, that is most acceptable in those awful moments, to pious minds; *that* is often heard with trembling diffidence and conscious apprehension, of contaminating motives and counteracting effects. The sweetest music in the ears of expiring piety, must be struck from another string: 'This is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son—The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

"In all probability, my bones will be deposited not far from *his*. God grant that I may die in the same temper, and in the same hope; and that our spirits may be united in the day of the Lord! Amen."

On the following day, May 15, 1815, the mortal remains of Mr. Fuller were interred in the burying ground adjoining the place of worship, where he had preached for two and thirty years. The funeral solemnities were numerously attended by persons from all the adjacent towns; the mourning resembled that in Egypt when Jacob died, and both ministers and people vied with each other in paying the last token of respect to his memory. Crowds of people rushed into the meeting house, the galleries of which had been propped in several places to prevent any accident or alarm, and still there were many who could not be admitted. At a quarter before five the funeral procession en-

tered, and the coffin was placed in the table pew. Mr. Toller began the service in prayer, with great fervour and devotion; Dr. Ryland preached the funeral sermon, from Romans viii. 10, which was afterwards printed; and Mr. Robert Hall delivered the oration. Six ministers, of the different denominations in Kettering, bore the pall; namely, two clergymen of the Establishment, two of Mr. Wesley's connection, Mr. Toller, and Mr. John Hall, assistant and successor to the deceased. Dr. Ryland spoke a few words at the grave, at the time of the interment.

"It is pleasing to reflect," as has been observed by Dr. Newman, "that a spontaneous homage was paid to him by persons of all ranks and degrees. Man of education and learning, men of distinction in wealth and office, the poor and illiterate, Christians in the establishment and out of it, of all denominations, hung delighted upon his lips;" and when those lips were sealed in death, they poured out their tears upon his grave. And as long as the spiritual achievements in India are recollected, it cannot be forgotten, that FULLER LIVED AND DIED A MARTYR TO THE MISSION.

In unison with the general testimonies of esteem, the most respectable Society in Great Britain paid their tribute to departed worth, by transmitting the following entry from their Minutes, on the 22nd of May following. "The Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, learn with deep regret, the decease of the late Rev. Andrew Fuller, Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society; and impressed with a sense of the valuable services rendered by that excellent individual, in promoting the translation and circulation of the sacred Scriptures in the east, desire to unite their condolence on this afflictive event with those of their Baptist brethren to whom he was more particularly allied, and of the Christian world by whom his memory will deserve to be held in affectionate and grateful veneration."

The congregation at Kettering memorialized the solemn event, by erecting a Monumental Tablet with the following Inscription:—

IN MEMORY OF THEIR REVERED AND BELOVED PASTOR,

THE REV. ANDREW FULLER,

THE CHURCH AND CONGREGATION HAVE ERECTED THIS TABLET.

HIS ARDENT PIETY,

THE STRENGTH AND SOUNDNESS OF HIS JUDGMENT,

HIS INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HUMAN HEART,

AND HIS PROFOUND ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES,

EMINENTLY QUALIFIED HIM FOR THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE,

WHICH HE SUSTAINED AMONGST THEM THIRTY TWO YEARS.

THE FORCE AND ORIGINALITY OF HIS GENIUS,

AIDED BY UNDAUNTED FIRMNESS,

RAISED HIM FROM OBSCURITY

TO HIGH DISTINCTION IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

BY THE WISDOM OF HIS PLANS,

AND BY HIS UNWEARIED DILIGENCE IN EXECUTING THEM,

HE RENDERED THE MOST IMPORTANT SERVICES

TO THE

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY;

OF WHICH HE WAS THE SECRETARY FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT,

AND TO THE PROSPERITY OF WHICH HE DEVOTED HIS LIFE.

IN ADDITION TO HIS OTHER LABOURS,

HIS WRITINGS ARE NUMEROUS AND CELEBRATED.

HE DIED, MAY 7th, 1815, AGED 61.

CHAPTER XIII.

Brief Review of Mr. Fuller's Character.

After what has been advanced in the preceding pages, on the subject of Mr. Fuller's abilities as a preacher and a writer, his missionary pursuits, general labours, and usefulness—all of which demand, and will receive, the tribute of esteem from Christians of every denomination, and be long and gratefully remembered by posterity—it is presumed that little more will be expected than a few remarks on some of the prominent features of his character, for the purpose of deriving instruction from the excellencies and defects which they exhibit, and of discharging the duty of a faithful and impartial biographer; especially as these Memoirs have already extended beyond the limits which the author had prescribed, though without exhausting the materials he had prepared to lay before the reader.

The favoured individual, whose life and character we are now contemplating, and who was so eminently formed for active and important services, was evidently endowed with great mental and corporeal strength, and possessed, according to his own expressive phrase, "a large portion of being,"—

> "A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
> No dangers fright him, and no labours tire."

In person, he was above the middle stature, tall, stout, and muscular; his sombre aspect impressive of fear, and repulsive to approach. And being, as he said, "of an athletic frame, and of a daring spirit, he was often in early life engaged in such exercises and exploits as might have issued in death, if the good hand of God had not preserved him." Alluding to these days of vanity, he would quote with sensible emotion the words of the prophet; "let not the mighty man glory in his might;" but having been a famous wrestler in his youth, he seldom met with a stout man without making an ideal comparison of strength, and possessing some of his former feelings in reference to its exercise. If necessity required, he was still by no means deficient in courage, of which some evidence was given after he removed to Kettering. When his rest was disturbed by the conduct of disorderly persons, he would sometimes rise in the night, rush alone into the street, half

dressed, and quell the disturbance, without any apprehension of danger.

His nerves were uniformly so firm, that he seemed to be made almost without fear; and such was his invincibility and perfect self-command, that it may be doubted whether he was ever seen in a state of agitation. Often would he divert himself with the saying of old lady Huntingdon's, who, on noticing the effeminacy of modern times, would "thank God that she was born before nerves were in fashion;" and whether Mr. Fuller also enjoyed this singular felicity or not, no man was less troubled with nervous sensibilities than himself. About the year 1793, the shock of an earthquake was felt across the kingdom, a little before eleven o'clock at night. Mr. Fuller had preached that evening at Braybrook, a few miles from Kettering, and was just retired to rest. The friend at whose house he lodged, being much alarmed, awoke him, by reporting the dreadful tidings of an earthquake! "Very well," said he, "I must sleep," and with perfect composure and satisfaction he continued his devoirs to Morpheus, while the frightened family were penetrated with dread and consternation.

His mode of living had an air of patriarchal simplicity; he seldom indulged in any thing more than the plainest food, and was very moderate in the use of fermented liquor. He carried his idea of economy to an extreme, deeming it scarcely allowable to eat animal food more than once a day: and when he occasionally departed from this rule, he would remark that it was a luxury somewhat like that of the prophet, who had 'bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening.' Possessing a robust constitution, and having been brought up, nearly, in habits of rusticity, he was unable to make due allowance for those whose manners were differently formed, or whose health required another mode of treatment. Hence he was in some instances severe in his reflections upon others, equally economical with himself, though in a different way, but who could not exactly adopt his ideas of frugality, or conform to the unrefined nature of his regimen. Free from parsimony and selfishness, the rigid sentiments and feelings which he carried into every department and into all the duties of life, left but little room for the expressions of hospitality, or even the ordinary forms of civility. Nature had formed him to endure hardness; and as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, he found a higher motive for his obedience and self-denial.

He was generally regular in his hours of rest, and possessed an even flow of spirits, bordering upon cheerfulness. Being requested to publish something on religious melancholy, for the relief of persons afflicted with it, he replied, "I know little or nothing about it; and what could any body write on such a subject?" In the early part of life, when in company with a chosen friend, he was fond of 'the heel of an evening;' and while engaged on religious topics, he would sometimes indulge in close and ardent conversation till the dawning of the day. He seldom allowed himself in night studies, or made any great efforts in early rising. He was a disciple of nature, and loved the order established in her empire. When some persons wondered how he wrote so much, preached so often, and entered upon such a multiplicity of engagements, he used very pleasantly to tell a tale about Dr. Gill. A gentleman having heard of his great learning and voluminous writings, called upon him to inquire by what extraordinary means he had achieved so much, and wherein his peculiar habits consisted. The doctor answered, he did not know that there was any thing extraordinary about it; for he ate, and drank, and rose, and slept, like other people. And though Mr. Fuller may be said to have done the work of almost ten men, he never seemed to be hurried, or to use any extraordinary means to accomplish it.

In domestic life he was calm and tranquil, reposing in the bosom of his family with great contentment and satisfaction. No man more enjoyed the softened pleasures of "home, sweet home," or entered with greater feeling into its interests and concerns; yet he never returned from his numerous fatiguing journeys to indulge himself in ease, or like one who sought a refuge from the intensity of labour, but solely with a view of renewing and multiplying his efforts in another form. Instead of requiring a total seclusion from every interruption, or burying himself six feet deep in his study, in order to prepare the numerous publications, which in one shape or other were constantly issuing from his pen, he generally sat at his desk, surrounded with the members of his family, in their common sitting-room, where, with astonishing rapidity, he composed his various papers for the press, and maintained at the same time, a most extensive and unremitted correspondence with the four quarters of the globe. He needed no excuse for delay, nor had any one cause to complain of his want of punctuality. If he wanted time to answer the numerous letters address-

ed to him, he made it by some exercise of self-denial, and was in every thing the determined enemy of procrastination. Such was his plan of operation, that he had no occasion to exclaim with a heathen emperor, "I have lost a day;" every hour was fully occupied in the duties of his station.

His spirit was ardent and invincible, displaying an almost unequalled decision of character. His judgment on most points, whether of a religious or temporal nature, was generally formed with such force and precision, that he seemed a stranger to hesitation, and seldom found occasion to review any of his resolutions. In difficult cases he sometimes consulted a few friends; but his conduct was invariably determined by his own judgment. In missionary concerns, which belonged not to himself only, and which involved the public interests of religion, he was much in the the habit of advising with his friend and coadjutor, Mr. Sutcliffe; into the texture of whose mind, caution was so thickly interwoven as nearly to destroy its elasticity, and who in some cases needed to be cautioned against caution itself. When Mr. Fuller received any intelligence from India which perplexed him, he would tie up his papers, get upon his horse, and ride over to Olney; where he could see things better, he used to say, than he could at Kettering. But having once settled in his own mind the question of right, on whatever subject, he would pursue his course with undeviating perseverance. There was a firmness in his principles and proceedings, which neither admitted relaxation nor delay. Difficulties and disappointments, instead of producing discouragement, afforded a fresh excitement to action, and in a good cause he never despaired of success. He had no idea of ease or rest, but seemed to contemplate life only as a scene of perpetual activity, in which he was to serve his generation by the will of God. Even to the very last, he spoke of death, not as the termination of a mortal existence, but as the end of all those labours, in which he had found his chief delight. He was not a man to whom mediocrity, in any sense, could be attributed. Promptitude, vigour, and resolution, marked his entire character. Quick in apprehension and discernment, he was no less speedy and ardent in action. Never did any man appear more fully to realize the worth of time, or to enter more practically into Solomon's maxim: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the

grave whither thou goest." He worked while it is called to-day, like one who seemed continually aware that the night cometh, when no man can work.

Mr. Fuller possessed considerable taste for reading; but as he had not time to consult many authors, his knowledge of course was less various than profound; and for the generality of modern publications especially, he entertained no very high esteem. His library for several years was not much larger than John Bunyan's, consisting chiefly of a scanty collection of the writings of the Puritans, and those of the New-England school. He was very partial to Owen and Bunyan. The Holy War he considered as the ablest of Bunyan's works, written on true metaphysical principles, without any of the parade of argument. Owen on Indwelling Sin, and on Spiritual Mindedness, displayed, as he thought, a depth of judgment, and a knowledge of human nature, scarcely to be found in any other author. President Edwards on the Will, and also on the Affections, he constantly recommended; the one as containing the ablest defence of theological theses, and the other as delineating the genuine nature of experimental piety. As for himself, who stood less in need of auxiliary aid, the Bible was his library, his treasury of knowledge, from whence he derived with the happiest success, his numerous allusions and illustrations. While the elegant scholar was studying to become acquainted with the Greek and Latin poets, his intimacy was with David and Isaiah, and the rest of the sacred classics. What he read of human authors was merely subordinate, and with a view to some critical illustration of the inspired writings. The fire of original genius was constantly fed by this boundless source of intelligence; and this it was that rendered his preaching and conversation peculiarly interesting, affording fresh excitements to zeal and diligence in the study of the holy Scriptures.

But if spirituality consists in an aptness for spiritual exercises, or in the prevalence of devout affections, in this Mr. Fuller was not eminent. His turn of mind led him to cultivate the intellectual and practical parts of religion, rather than the devotional; and the want of fervour and enlargement, especially in the duty of prayer, was noticed and lamented by several of his brethren. He discovered an habitual and commendable disposition to converse on religious subjects, and appeared to have but little relish for any other; but it was his remarks on their consistency and

propriety, their harmony and tendency, as affording grounds for rational belief, and motives to holy obedience, that became the subject of admiration, rather than any remarkable degree of spirituality displayed in the discussion, or any immediate or successful effort to impress the heart and kindle the fire of devotion. To this cause has already been attributed the want of adequate success in the discharge of his professional engagements; and with the exception arising from late experience, such was the general complexion of his religious constitution.

The fertility of his genius is universally acknowledged; and his aptness to improve the occurrences of life to sacred purposes, was conspicuous on various occasions. Scarcely any thing passed under his notice without affording a lesson of instruction, and many of his sermons had their origin in local circumstances, which furnished both the topic of discourse, and the medium of illustration. Previous to the Association at Nottingham, in 1784, he was going to preach at some distance from home, after a heavy fall of rain, which had inundated a part of the road, so as nearly to render it impassable. Depending on the information of a guide who went with him, he ventured to cross the flood to some distance; but as he advanced, the danger increased, and the water soon reached his horse's saddle. Mr. Fuller thought they were plunging into certain destruction, and was unwilling to proceed. But his guide called out, "Go forward, go forward—all will be well;" and still depending on his testimony, they were landed safe on the other side. This singular occurrence suggested to him the necessity of a guide, and the importance of "walking by faith, and not by sight," in our passage to the heavenly world; a subject which he afterwards so happily illustrated, in the earliest, and one of the best of his printed sermons.*

Few persons possessed a larger share of genuine wit than Mr. Fuller, or were more apt at repartee. In some instances he was severely sarcastic, and the propensity to satirize was one of his besetting sins. Earlier in life he allowed himself a latitude which his maturer years disapproved; but he was at all times utterly averse from polluting the sanctity of religion with the levity of a jest. The application of Scripture phraseology to common purposes, implying a comparison between sacred and secular con-

* See page 138.

cerns, grated upon his ear, and sometimes greatly wounded his feelings. He was once travelling in company to St. Ives and St. Noets, a little undetermined which of the places he should visit first, both being in the same neighbourhood. Arriving at two cross roads, with one of the towns on his right and the other on his left, he was asked, "To which of the Saints wilt thou turn?" Instead of smiling at the question, his heart was grieved; and to the end of the journey, he lectured on the impropriety of such irreverent allusions. In the pulpit especially, he could not endure any thing that had the appearance of lightness; and severely condemned the meanness that can avail itself of the silence which decency imposes upon an audience, to render it the vehicle of personal invective; yet he could on some occasions convey a pointed reproof with perfect good humour, and in a way that indicated the shrewdness of his observation. On a Lord's day in the afternoon, perceiving some of his hearers to be drowsy as soon as he had read his text, he struck his Bible three times against the side of the pulpit, calling out, "What, asleep already? I am often afraid I should *preach* you asleep; but the fault cannot be mine to-day, for I have not yet begun!"

"It is very well known," says a monthly editor, "that Mr. Fuller was generally candid and forbearing towards young ministers, and ready to assist them in the explication of a subject, or in the composition of a sermon; but he also knew how to chastise vanity, ignorance, and conceit, and was not very sparing with persons of this description. A young man calling on him on a Saturday, and announcing rather consequentially, that he was going to preach on the morrow at a little distance; Mr. Fuller asked him for his text. He readily answered that he was going to preach from, "One thing is needful." And what is that one thing, said Mr. Fuller. Tyro replied without hesitation, *Christ*, certainly. Why then, said he, you are worse than the Socinians. They *do* allow him to be a man, but you are going to reduce him to a mere 'thing.' This unfortunate remark spoiled Tyro's sermon; and when he arrived at the place of his destination, where the flock was waiting for his sage instructions, he had not courage to bring forward what he had provided with much study and care."* On another occasion, after delivering a sermon to a distant congregation, he was rather rudely

*New Evan. Mag. 1815, page 365.

accosted by one of the would-be judges of evangelical preaching, who said to him, as he descended the pulpit stairs, "You left Christ at home, sir!" "Did I indeed?" replied Mr. Fuller: "then I shall hope to find him there when I return." Repartees of this kind abounded in his conversation; and both in his sermons and writings there is a greater variety of apophthegms than is usually to be met with in modern authors.

It was asserted by the ingenious bishop Atterbury, "that there never was a good writer who had not the art of transplanting into his own writings, the beauties of his predecessors; and that the man who imitated nobody, would probably find no imitators." Whether this remark be just or not, it was totally inapplicable to Mr. Fuller, who had a stronger claim to the praise of originality than most of those who are denominated men of genius. It has been insinuated, however, by some of his opponents, that he borrowed his religious system from Richard Baxter, and that he published as his own, some ingenious sentiments which are to be found in the writings of President Edwards.* That he never availed himself of the labours of others, need not be affirmed; nor would it be creditable to his understanding; but every one acquainted with him must know, that he looked at every thing with his own eyes, and that his mind was habitually occupied with his own thoughts; and it would be marvellous in the extreme, if every coincidence between two or three thinking and powerful minds must be liable to the charge of plagiarism. Mr. Fuller assuredly believed many things which Baxter and other good men believed; but to call him on that account a Baxterian, or to affirm that he took his leading sentiments from that writer, is just as equitable as to make a Socinian of him because he happened to believe in the humanity of Christ, and in the doctrine of the resurrection. The fact is, that he had *not seen* the polemical writings of Baxter, till *after* he had published what others called his Baxterianism; and then, to meet the charge, he for the first time took the trouble to examine them. Having done so, he observed in a letter to a friend, "I have lately been reading the controversial pieces of Baxter, and found them tedious and crabbed in the extreme. It is true, they contain some of

* New Evan. Mag. 1815, p. 277.

my sentiments, but much that I disapprove." It is obvious enough, that his turn of thinking and mode of expression were entirely his own; he had no models, nor did he so much as possess the power of imitation. When a friend had revised one of his earlier manuscripts, with a view of suggesting a few literal alterations previously to its being sent to press, Mr. Fuller observed, "that in no instance where the meaning would be affected, ought any alteration to be made for the sake of rendering the sentence more elegant, without the concurrence of the author. No one but him can perceive the shades of meaning with exactness. I would not suffer a work of mine to be corrected by the best writer upon earth, unless I had the revision of his corrections. He might write a work more correctly than I, but he would make *my* work more incorrect." He could seldom reconcile himself to the drudgery of quotation, even where it might have been done to advantage; but used to say, in allusion to the spider, that he liked best to publish what he had spun out of his own bowels. In the composition of his sermons, his rule was, to consult no commentator on his text, till after he had formed his own judgment, and then but very rarely, and in the way which he himself has mentioned in his posthumous discourses on the Apocalypse.* The praise of originality cannot be denied to him, without the most manifest injustice.

There was an independence and an ingenuousness about him, which could not escape the most transient observer. He scorned every thing that was mean and selfish, and was one of the last men in the world to plume himself with borrowed feathers. He hated all manner of guile and deceit, and whatever is assumed as a disguise to sentiment and feeling. Affectation and vanity were the objects of his supreme contempt. Vanity, he used to say, was the sin of little minds, and pride of great ones; and when any instances of this kind obtruded upon his attention, they did not fail to awaken his keenest satire. Yet, much as he abhorred the appearance of conceit and arrogance, especially in religious characters, he took pleasure in giving countenance and encouragement to real and modest worth. He had no envious or rancorous feelings about him; his constitution was unproductive of the meaner vices. Disinterested and self-denied, he had no worldly ambition to gratify, no sor-

* Preface, p. xi.

did appetites to indulge. There was a transparent sincerity in all his actions, and even the misguided parts of his conduct were entitled to the praise of good intention.

The patience and the fortitude with which Mr. Fuller sustained the various trials of heart and intellect, have been in part exemplified in the former pages of these Memoirs. We have witnessed the overflowings of his soul under the most painful bereavements, and the agonies produced by some of his living sorrows; we have also seen that his grief was generally moderated as well as sanctified by the influence of religious principle, which not only prevented despondency and discontent, but conducted him to the only source of hope and consolation. In seasons of deep distress, he would sometimes set himself apart for fasting and prayer; and afflictions, though often grievous, seldom failed to produce in him the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Towards the latter part of life especially, these effects became more visible. The memoranda of his experience on these occasions, which he was in the habit of preserving, might, in the hands of a judicious biographer, have furnished much valuable instruction to the friends of vital godliness, and discovered more of the genuine exercises of his heart than can be known through any other medium. But there was one feature in his domestic afflictions, too amiable and interesting to be overlooked. Instead of sending to a distance for some minister of his own denomination, to conduct the usual solemnities attendant upon mortality, he almost invariably resorted to his truly respectable and reverend brother, the late Mr. Toller, minister of the Independent congregation in the same town, in whose sympathy and friendship he found that succour and relief which we look for in a day of trouble. Nor did Mr. Fuller fail to return equal expressions of regard, when it came to the lot of his amiable friend to experience similar bereavements. This lovely conduct was dictated, not only by reciprocal affection and esteem, but by the words of inspiration, which Mr. Fuller often quoted on these occasions: "Go not into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: better is a neighbour that is near, than a brother far off:"

Courage and resolution, we have already remarked, were constituent to his nature; they also received an impetus from his moral system, and the importance which he attached to an upright and decided conduct. In advocating

the cause of God and truth against open and disguised infidels, and against the enemies of missions at home and abroad, he evinced the boldness of a lion; regarding neither the frowns of the great, nor the combinations of the powerful. He would have admonished a wicked prince with the courage of a Latimer, had he been called to it; and gone in before Pharaoh, not fearing the wrath of the king. The heroism blended with his character is strongly marked in the style and tenour of his writings, and in the similies employed in the illustration of his subjects; all breathe a martial air, and bid defiance to the enemy. He appeared most in his element when surrounded with difficulties, and exposed to the attack of numerous opponents; then he could "ride in the whirlwind, and direct the storm."

It is not surprising, that talents of so high an order should have acquired a most extensive influence; superiority of mind contains a warrant for command, and men in general are willing to pay the tribute due. Mr. Fuller did not assume the dictatorship, it was freely given to him; the deference shown to his judgment decided every thing, and from it there was no appeal. Probably many other circles in the religious world enjoy a similar advantage, where the thinking of one man saves the trouble to all the rest; yet it may be doubted whether this easy expedient be not productive of some injurious effects, and amongst others, that of prostrating the human faculties before the object of their admiration, till it ceases to be tangible, and becomes invested with some imaginary grandeur, which it would be awful to approach. Hence arises the timidity in examining character, the disposition to give too high a colouring to biographical sketches, and to confound every just distinction with indiscriminate and unmeaning praise. It is better for us to know that every thing pertaining to man is imperfect, and that where we see much positive excellence, we may expect to find some positive defects; then only are we placed in a situation to contemplate the lives of the best of men to edification and advantage. It was on this principle that Mr. Fuller conducted his expository lectures on the book of Genesis; and in examining the history of the patriarchs, he unreservedly exposed the spots and blemishes that were to be found in their characters. It cannot be pretended that he was himself more exempt from the infirmities of our fallen nature, than were those illustrious worthies; and certain it is, that Mr. Fuller had no such views of his own

character, any more than of the character of others, who were most celebrated for their piety.

"The most perfect instruction for the generality of mankind, which history furnishes," says an able writer, "is supplied from the exhibition of the mixed; that is, of imperfect characters. Unvarying scenes of fraud, violence and blood; the representation of undeviating, unrelenting, unblushing profligacy, must of necessity create disgust, or diminish the horror of vice. The *real* annals of mankind present no model of pure and perfect virtue but one; and from its singularity, it cannot in all respects serve as a pattern for imitation. We contemplate it at an awful distance; we feel ourselves every moment condemned by it; we turn from the divine excellency which covers our faces with shame, and casts us down to the ground, towards the mercy which has sealed our pardon, and the grace which raises us up again."*

Though Mr. Fuller's natural temper was neither churlish nor morose, it was not distinguished by gentleness. There was a sturdiness about him, which gave an appearance of roughness and severity to his behaviour, often forbidding to strangers, and sometimes disagreeable to his friends. A vigorous constitution and uncultivated habits, allied to an independent and ardent mind, occasioned an excess of freedom and fidelity, not unfrequently at variance with the softer passions, and producing a luxuriance of the severer virtues. "Men of a rough and unsparing address," as the amiable Cowper observes, "should take great care that they are always in the right; the justness and propriety of their sentiments and censures being the only tolerable apology that can be made for their severity;" but this kind of infallibility could no more be predicated of Mr. Fuller, than of any other man. He had too much dignity to be offended on trifling occasions, was never fond of litigation, and seldom engaged in personal disputes; his mien and aspect afforded him the most ample protection from the intrusions of petulance and conceit. Having been often reminded of his stern behaviour, which had become rather a general subject of complaint, he ventured one day to mention it in a company of ministers, by way of appeal. One of them replied, "Why, Sir, you do not appear likely to make war without some just occasion; but it is pretty evident (pointing to his eyebrows) that you keep up a formidable

* Hunter's Sacred Biography, vol. iv. p. 225.

peace establishment." The company of course enjoyed the pleasantry of this remark, till another of them perceiving the effect it was likely to produce, added, "We had better stop; or we shall be in danger of putting brother Fuller's troops into motion."

Every one acquainted with Mr. Fuller's powers of description, and who has noticed the accuracy and fidelity with which he has delineated some of the scripture characters, in his discourses on the book of Genesis, would feel a sort of eager curiosity to inspect some of the moral profiles of cotemporary characters, which he occasionally executed. The following is one of this description. Alluding to an eminent minister, whose life and labours adorned the last half century, he says, "His character, you may suppose, has often passed before my mind; and as it passed, I drew the following short sketch of it.—He is in general a man of great integrity; but his prejudices are strong, and when once imbibed, in great danger of becoming inveterate. His integrity also is too much confined to doing right, *while he is right:* let him but once commit a fault, and he is one of the last men from whom you may expect an ingenuous acknowledgment. The pride of *consistency* is his easy besetting sin."—With the exception only of the last part of this description every one acquainted with his character must see, that Mr. Fuller in this instance, though undesignedly, drew a most correct likeness of himself, as well as of the respectable individual for whom it was intended.

It is but justice however to add, that he was so deeply sensible of the ruggedness of his natural disposition, of his want of forbearance and moderation, and of his proneness to undue severity, notwithstanding the gratuitous assertions of some of his injudicious and inconsiderate friends, who claim for him attributes which he never possessed, that he often made these failings a subject of audible lamentation; and no man more severely condemned what was wrong in his temper and conduct than he did himself. Having been freely admonished, he thus wrote in a letter afterwards:

"I do most sincerely thank you for your remarks on my proneness to err in that way, and hope it will be my concern to watch and pray against it. If I have thereby lost the love of my brethren, I must bear it as well as I can.

I do not doubt your love to me; and the greatest proof lies in your having pointed out to me my faults. I hope you will not withhold this kind of remarks in future."

On another occasion he acknowledged, in a style of great pleasantness, his want of urbanity and politeness in his general deportment.

"I seldom deal much," says he, "in complaisance; and when I do I seem to make poor work of it. I took a liberty with my friend, which I afterwards thought was too much, and so I begged his pardon. But begging pardon is a thing so unusual with me, that it has well nigh thrown my friend into a melancholy; so I promise not to attempt any more apologies."

These failings, however, though they cast a shade over his brightest performances, and diminish the esteem that is otherwise due to the most splendid talents, did not affect the grand motives by which his general conduct was directed. His entire character was formed of STERLING INTEGRITY, ramified into all his actions. In principle, as well as in doctrine, he "showed incorruptness," and great "sincerity." The severest suspicion could never reach him; his elevation on this part of the moral scale placed him far beyond the keenest eye of jealousy, and nearer to the throne of eternal justice than is common to the most distinguished mortals. His sense of honour and fidelity, allowed of no resort to the schemes of interest, or the too common arts of dishonest temporizing. No hopes, no fears, no considerations whatever, could cause him to deviate from what he judged to be the path of uprightness. Never was human integrity found more inflexible, or honesty more true to her intention. For this inestimable quality, he would have been admired and revered by Aristides the Just, whatever might be his deficiencies in the milder graces, or in the more superficial, though ornamental parts of the human character. Unlike as he was, in many respects, to "that disciple whom Jesus loved," he bore a strong resemblance to that prince of apostles, who cut off the ear of Malchus.

It may be doubted whether, since the time of John Knox, any man could be found on this side the globe, who laboured more to cultivate and extend the knowledge of the truth than Mr. Fuller; and to that eminent reformer he bore a striking likeness, both in his excellencies and defects. Nor can there be any hesitation in subscribing fully to the

sentiment that has been expressed by his venerable friend, the late Dr. Ryland,—That he was probably "the most judicious and able theological writer that ever belonged to the Baptist denomination; and that he will be highly esteemed for his able defence of the truth as it is in Jesus, and for his zeal for the propagation of the gospel, not only by his cotemporaries of various religious persuasions, but by posterity, as long as the English language, and the history of the Baptist Mission to India shall endure."

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